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. . . . "Accuse me not
Of arrogance, ...
If, having walked with Nature,
And offered, far as frailty would allow,
My heart a daily sacrifice to Truth,
I now affirm of Nature and of Truth,
Whom I have served, that their Divinity
Revolts, offended at the ways of men,
Philosophers, who, though the human soul,
Be of a thousand faculties composed,
And twice ten thousand interests, do yet prize
This soul, and the transcendent universe
No more than as a mirror that reflects
To proud Self-love her own intelligence."

WORDSWORTH.

PART III.

NEW YORK:
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TO THE

LANDSCAPE ARTISTS OF ENGLAND,

This Work

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

BY THEIR SINCERE ADMIRER,

THE AUTHOR.

PART III.

OF IDEAS OF BEAUTY.

SECTION I.

OF THE THEORETIC FACULTY.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE RANK AND RELATIONS OF THE THEORETIC FACULTY.

§ 1 With what care the subject is to be approached.

ALTHOUGH the hasty execution and controversial tone of the former portions of this essay have been subjects of frequent regret to the writer, yet the one was in some measure excusable in a work referred to a temporary end, and the other unavoidable, in one directed against particular opinions. Nor are either of any necessary detriment to its availableness as a foundation for more careful and extended survey, in so far as its province was confined to the assertion of obvious and visible facts, the verification of which could in no degree be dependent either on the care with which they might be classed, or the temper in which they were regarded. Not so with respect to the investigation now before us, which, being not of things outward, and sensibly demonstrable, but of the value and meaning of mental impressions, must be entered upon with a modesty and cautiousness proportioned to the difficulty of determining the likeness, or community of such impressions, as they are received by different men, and with seriousness proportioned to the importance of rightly regarding those faculties over which we have moral power, and therefore in relation to which we assuredly incur a

moral responsibility. There is not the thing left to the choice of man to do or not to do, but there is some sort or degree of duty involved in his determination; and by how much the more, therefore, our subject becomes embarrassed by the cross influences of variously admitted passion, administered discipline, or encouraged affection, upon the minds of men, by so much the more it becomes matter of weight and import to observe by what laws we should be guided, and of what responsibilities regardful, in all that we admit, administer, or encourage.

§ 2. And of what importance considered.

Nor indeed have I ever, even in the preceding sections, spoken with levity, though sometimes perhaps with rashness. I have never treated the subject as other than demanding heedful and serious examination, and taking high place among those which justify as they reward our utmost ardor and earnestness of pursuit. That it justifies them must be my present task to prove; that it demands them has never been doubted. Art, properly so called, is no recreation; it cannot be learned at spare moments, nor pursued when we have nothing better to do. It is no handiwork for drawing-room tables; no relief of the ennui of boudoirs; it must be understood and undertaken seriously or not at all. To advance it men's lives must be given, and to receive it their hearts. "Le peintre Rubens s'amuse à être ambassadeur," said one with whom, but for his own words, we might have thought that effort had been absorbed in power, and the labor of his art in its felicity.—"E faticoso lo studio della pittura, et sempre si fa il mare maggiore," said he, who of all men was least likely to have left us discouraging report of anything that majesty of intellect could grasp, or continuity of labor overcome.* But that this labor, the necessity of which in all ages has been most frankly admitted by the greatest men, is justifiable in a moral point of view, that it is not the pouring out of men's lives upon the ground, that it has functions of usefulness addressed to the weightiest of human interests, and that the objects of it have calls upon us which it is inconsistent alike with our human dignity and our heavenward duty to disobey—has never been boldly asserted nor fairly admitted; least of all is it likely to be so in these days of dispatch and display, where vanity, on the one side, supplies the place of that love of art which is the only effective

* Tintoret. (Ridolfi. Vita.)

patronage, and on the other, of the incorruptible and earnest pride which no applause, no reprobation, can blind to its short-comings, nor beguile of its hope.

And yet it is in the expectation of obtaining at least a partial acknowledgment of this, as a truth influential both of aim and conduct, that I enter upon the second division of my subject. The time I have already devoted to the task I should have considered altogether inordinate, and that which I fear may be yet required for its completion would have been cause to me of utter discouragement, but that the object I propose to myself is of no partial nor accidental importance. It is not now to distinguish between disputed degrees of ability in individuals, or agreeableness in canvases, it is not now to expose the ignorance or defend the principles of party or person. It is to summon the moral energies of the nation to a forgotten duty, to display the use, force, and function of a great body of neglected sympathies and desires, and to elevate to its healthy and beneficial operation that art which, being altogether addressed to them, rises or falls with their variableness of vigor,—now leading them with Tyrtæan fire, now singing them to sleep with baby murmurings.

§ 3. The doubtful force of the term "utility."

Only as I fear that with many of us the recommendation of our own favorite pursuits is rooted more in conceit of ourselves, than affection towards others, so that sometimes in our very pointing of the way, we had rather that the intricacy of it should be admired than unfolded, whence a natural distrust of such recommendation may well have place in the minds of those who have not yet perceived any value in the thing praised, and because also, men in the present century understand the word Useful in a strange way, or at least (for the word has been often so accepted from the beginning of time) since in these days, they act its more limited meaning farther out, and give to it more practical weight and authority, it will be well in the outset that I define exactly what kind of utility I mean to attribute to art, and especially to that branch of it which is concerned with those impressions of external beauty whose nature it is our present object to discover.

§ 4. Its proper sense

That is to everything created, pre-eminently useful, which enables it rightly and fully to perform the functions appointed to it by its Creator. Therefore, that we may deter-

mine what is chiefly useful to man, it is necessary first to determine the use of man himself.

Man's use and function (and let him who will not grant me this follow me no farther, for this I purpose always to assume) is to be the witness of the glory of God, and to advance that glory by his reasonable obedience and resultant happiness.

Whatever enables us to fulfil this function, is in the pure and first sense of the word useful to us. Pre-eminently therefore whatever sets the glory of God more brightly before us. But things that only help us to exist, are in a secondary and mean sense, useful, or rather, if they be looked for alone, they are useless and worse, for it would be better that we should not exist, than that we should guiltily disappoint the purposes of existence.

§ 5. How falsely applied in these times.

And yet people speak in this working age, when they speak from their hearts, as if houses, and lands, and food, and raiment were alone useful, and as if sight, thought, and admiration,* were all profitless, so that men insolently call themselves Utilitarians, who would burn, if they had their way, themselves and their race into vegetables; men who think, as far as such can be said to think, that the meat is more than the life, and the raiment than the body, who look to the earth as a stable, and to its fruit as fodder; vinedressers and husbandmen, who love the corn they grind, and the grapes they crush, better than the gardens of the angels upon the slopes of Eden; hewers of wood and drawers of water, who think that the wood they hew and the water they draw, are better than the pine-forests that cover the mountains like the shadow of God, and than the great rivers that move like his eternity. And so comes upon us that woe of the preacher, that though God "hath made everything beautiful in his time, also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end."

§ 6. The evil consequences of such interpretation. How connected with national power.

This Nebuchadnezzar curse, that sends us to grass like oxen, seems to follow but too closely on the excess or continuance of national power and peace. In the perplexities of nations, in their struggles for existence, in their infancy, their impotence, or even their disorganization, they have higher hopes and nobler passions. Out of the suffering

* We live by admiration, hope, and love. (Excursion, Book IV.)

comes the serious mind; out of the salvation, the grateful heart; out of the endurance, the fortitude; out of the deliverance, the faith; but now when they have learned to live under providence of laws, and with decency and justice of regard for each other; and when they have done away with violent and external sources of suffering, worse evils seem arising out of their rest, evils that vex less and mortify more, that suck the blood though they do not shed it, and ossify the heart though they do not torture it. And deep though the causes of thankfulness must be to every people at peace with others and at unity in itself, there are causes of fear also, a fear greater than of sword and sedition; that dependence on God may be forgotten because the bread is given and the water is sure, that gratitude to him may cease because his constancy of protection has taken the semblance of a natural law, that heavenly hope may grow faint amidst the full fruition of the world, that selfishness may take place of undemanded devotion, compassion be lost in vain-glory, and love in dissimulation,* that enervation may succeed to strength, apathy to patience, and the noise of jesting words and foulness of dark thoughts, to the earnest purity of the girded loins and the burning lamp. About the river of human life there is a wintry wind, though a heavenly sunshine; the iris colors its agitation, the frost fixes upon its repose. Let us beware that our rest become not the rest of stones, which so long as they are torrent-tossed, and thunder-stricken, maintain their majesty, but when the stream is silent, and the storm passed, suffer the grass to cover them and the lichen to feed on them, and are ploughed down into dust.

§ 7. How to be averted.

And though I believe that we have salt enough of ardent and holy mind amongst us to keep us in some measure from this moral decay, yet the signs of it must be watched with anxiety, in all matter however trivial, in all directions however distant. And at this time, when the iron roads are tearing up the surface of Europe, as grape-shot do the sea, when their great sagene is drawing and twitching the ancient frame and strength of England together, contracting all its various life, its rocky arms and rural heart, into a narrow, finite, calculating metropolis of manufactures, when there is not a monument throughout the cities of Europe, that speaks of old years and mighty peo-

* Rom. xii. 9.

… away to … cafés and gaming-houses.[4]

… works of art, or of historical interest … comment may, perhaps, be in some … which the experience of every trav-

… houses supported on columns of wood … north of France, at the corner of … for the enlarging of some … across the street leading to the … purpose I know not.

… houses on the quay is now disap- … the destruction of the noble … interfered with the … churches are used as … St. Julien. One of the … architecture in Eu- … a café, and its … if I recollect …

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blood, for it is of their souls' travail, there is need,
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of public funds, the fronts of the Duomo, Santa Croce, St-
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Faded tapestries, and lottery tickets (the latter for the ben
stitutions) are exposed for sale in the c ncil chambers.

ple, but it is being swept away to build cafés and gaming-houses;* when the honor of God is thought to consist in the poverty of his temple, and the column is shortened, and the pinnacle shattered, the color denied to the casement, and the marble to the altar,

* The extent of ravage among works of art, or of historical interest, continually committing throughout the continent may, perhaps, be in some measure estimated from the following facts, to which the experience of every traveller may add indefinitely:—

At Beauvois—The magnificent old houses supported on columns of workmanship (so far as I recollect) unique in the north of France, at the corner of the market-place, have recently been destroyed for the enlarging of some ironmongery and grocery warehouses. The arch across the street leading to the cathedral has been destroyed also, for what purpose, I know not.

At Rouen—The last of the characteristic houses on the quay is now disappearing. When I was last there, I witnessed the destruction of the noble gothic portal of the church of St. Nicholas, whose position interfered with the courtyard of an hotel; the greater part of the ancient churches are used as smithies, or warehouses for goods. So also at Tours (St. Julien.) One of the most interesting and superb pieces of middle-age domestic architecture in Europe, opposite the west front of the cathedral, is occupied as a café, and its lower story concealed by painted wainscotings; representing, if I recollect right, twopenny rolls surrounded by circles of admiring cherubs.

At Geneva—The wooden projections or loggias which were once the characteristic feature of the city, have been entirely removed within the last ten years.

At Pisa—The old Baptistery is at this present time in process of being "restored," that is, dashed to pieces, and common stone painted black and varnished, substituted for its black marble. In the Campo Santo, the invaluable frescoes, which might be protected by merely glazing the arcades, are left exposed to wind and weather. While I was there last year, I saw a monument put up against the lower part of the wall, to some private person; the bricklayers knocked out a large space of the lower brickwork, with what beneficial effect to the loose and blistered stucco on which the frescoes are painted above, I leave the reader to imagine; inserted the tablet, and then plastered over the marks of the insertion, destroying a portion of the border of one of the paintings. The greater part of Giotto's "Satan before God," has been destroyed by the recent insertion of one of the beams of the roof.

The tomb of Antonio Puccinello, which was the last actually put up against the frescoes, and which destroyed the terminal subject of the Giotto series, bears date 1808.

It has been proposed, (or at least it is so reported,) that the church of La Spina should be destroyed in order to widen the quay.

At Florence—One of its most important and characteristic streets, that in which stands the church of Or San Michele, has been within the last five years entirely destroyed and rebuilt in the French style; consisting now almost exclusively of shops of bijouterie and parfumerie. Owing to this direction

while exchequers are exhausted in luxury of boudoirs, and pride of reception-rooms; when we ravage without a pause all the loveliness of creation which God in giving pronounced good, and destroy without a thought all those labors which men have given their lives, and their sons' sons' lives to complete, and have left for a legacy to all their kind, a legacy of more than their hearts' blood, for it is of their souls' travail, there is need, bitter need, to bring back, if we may, into men's minds, that to live is nothing, unless to live be to know Him by whom we live, and that he is not

of public funds, the fronts of the Duomo, Santa Croce, St. Lorenzo, and half the others in Florence remain in their original bricks.

The old refectory of Santa Croce, containing an invaluable Cenacolo, if not by Giotto, at least one of the finest works of his school, is used as a carpet manufactory. In order to see the fresco, I had to get on the top of a loom. The *cenacolo* (of Raffaelle?) recently discovered, I saw when the refectory it adorns was used as a coach-house. The fresco, which gave Raffaelle the idea of the Christ of the Transfiguration, is in an old wood shed at San Miniato, concealed behind a heap of faggots. In June, last year, I saw Gentile da Fabriano's picture of the Adoration of the Magi, belonging to the Academy of Florence, put face upmost in a shower of rain in an open cart; on my suggesting the possibility of the rain hurting it, an old piece of matting was thrown over its face, and it was wheeled away "per essere pulita." What fate this signified, is best to be discovered from the large Perugino in the Academy; whose divine distant landscape is now almost concealed by the mass of French ultramarine, painted over it apparently with a common house brush, by the picture cleaner.

Not to detain the reader by going through the cities of Italy, I will only further mention, that at Padua, the rain beats through the west window of the Arena chapel, and runs down *over* the frescoes. That at Venice, in September last, I saw three buckets set in the scuola di San Rocco to catch the rain which came *through* the *canvasses* of Tintoret on the roof; and that while the old works of art are left thus unprotected, the palaces are being restored in the following modes. The English residents knock out bow windows to see up and down the canal. The Italians paint all the *marble* white or cream color, stucco the fronts, and paint them in blue and white stripes to imitate alabaster. (This has been done with Danieli's hotel, with the north angle of the church of St. Mark, there replacing the real alabasters which have been torn down, with a noble old house in St. Mark's place, and with several in the narrow canals.) The marbles of St. Marks, and carvings, are being *scraped* down to make them look bright—the lower arcade of the Doge's palace is whitewashed—the entrance porch is being restored—the operation having already proceeded so far as the knocking off of the heads of the old statues—an iron railing painted black and yellow has been put round the court. Faded tapestries, and lottery tickets (the latter for the benefit of charitable institutions) are exposed for sale in the council chambers.

to be known by marring his fair works, and blotting out the evidence of his influences upon his creatures, not amid the hurry of crowds and crash of innovation, but in solitary places, and out of the glowing intelligences which he gave to men of old. He did not teach them how to build for glory and for beauty, he did not give them the fearless, faithful, inherited energies that worked on and down from death to death, generation after generation, that we, foul and sensual as we are, might give the carved work of their poured-out spirit to the axe and the hammer; he has not cloven the earth with rivers, that their white wild waves might turn wheels and push paddles, nor turned it up under as it were fire, that it might heat wells and cure diseases; he brings not up his quails by the east wind, only to let them fall in flesh about the camp of men: he has not heaped the rocks of the mountain only for the quarry, nor clothed the grass of the field only for the oven.

§ 8. Division of the pursuits of men into subservient and objective.

All science and all art may be divided into that which is subservient to life, and which is the object of it. As subservient to life, or practical, their results are, in the common sense of the word, useful. As the object of life or theoretic, they are, in the common sense, useless; and yet the step between practical and theoretic science is the step between the miner and the geologist, the apothecary and the chemist; and the step between practical and theoretic art is that between the bricklayer and the architect, between the plumber and the artist, and this is a step allowed on all hands to be from less to greater; so that the so-called useless part of each profession does by the authoritative and right instinct of mankind assume the superior and more noble place, even though books be sometimes written, and that by writers of no ordinary mind, which assume that a chemist is rewarded for the years of toil which have traced the greater part of the combinations of matter to their ultimate atoms, by discovering a cheap way of refining sugar, and date the eminence of the philosopher, whose life has been spent in the investigation of the laws of light, from the time of his inventing an improvement in spectacles.

But the common consent of men proves and accepts the proposition, that whatever part of any pursuit ministers to the bodily comforts, and admits of material uses, is ignoble, and whatsoever part is addressed to the mind only, is noble; and that geology

does better in reclothing dry bones and revealing lost creations, than in tracing veins of lead and beds of iron; astronomy better in opening to us the houses of heaven than in teaching navigation; botany better in displaying structure than in expressing juices; surgery better in investigating organization than in setting limbs; only it is ordained that, for our encouragement, every step we make in the more exalted range of science adds something also to its practical applicabilities; that all the great phenomena of nature, the knowledge of which is desired by the angels only, by us partly, as it reveals to farther vision the being and the glory of Him in whom they rejoice and we live, dispense yet such kind influences and so much of material blessing as to be joyfully felt by all inferior creatures, and to be desired by them with such single desire as the imperfection of their nature may admit;* that the strong torrents which, in their own gladness fill the hills with hollow thunder and the vales with winding light, have yet their bounden charge of field to feed and barge to bear; that the fierce flames to which the Alp owes its upheaval and the volcano its terror, temper for us the metal vein and quickening spring; and that for our incitement, I say not our reward, for knowledge is its own reward, herbs have their healing, stones their preciousness, and stars their times.

§ 9. Their relative dignities.

It would appear, therefore, that those pursuits which are altogether theoretic, whose results are desirable or admirable in themselves and for their own sake, and in which no farther end to which their productions or discoveries are referred, can interrupt the contemplation of things as they are, by the endeavor to discover of what selfish uses they are capable, (and of this order are painting and sculpture,) ought to take rank above all pursuits which have any taint in them of subserviency to life, in so far as all such tendency is the sign of less eternal and less holy function.† And such rank these two sublime arts would indeed assume in the minds of nations, and become objects of corresponding efforts, but for two fatal and wide-spread errors respecting the great faculties of mind concerned in them.

§ 10. How reversed through erring notions of the contemplative and imaginative faculties.

* Hooker, Eccl. Pol. Book I. chap. ii. § 2.

† I do not assert that the accidental utility of a theoretic pursuit, as of botany for instance, in any way degrades it, though it cannot be considered

The first of these, or the theoretic faculty, is concerned with the moral perception and appreciation of ideas of beauty. And the error respecting it is the considering and calling it æsthetic, degrading it to a mere operation of sense, or perhaps worse, of custom, so that the arts which appeal to it sink into a mere amusement, ministers to morbid sensibilities, ticklers and fanners of the soul's sleep.

The second great faculty is the imaginative, which the mind exercises in a certain mode of regarding or combining the ideas it has received from external nature, and the operations of which become in their turn objects of the theoretic faculty to other minds.

And the error respecting this faculty is, that its function is one of falsehood, that its operation is to exhibit things as they are *not*, and that in so doing it mends the works of God.

§ 11. Object of the present section.

Now, as these are the two faculties to which I shall have occasion constantly to refer during that examination of the ideas of beauty and relation on which we are now entering, because it is only as received and treated by these, that those ideas become exalted and profitable, it becomes necessary for me, in the outset, to explain their power and define their sphere, and to vindicate, in the system of our nature, their true place for the intellectual lens and moral retina by which and on which our informing thoughts are concentrated and represented.

as elevating it. But essential utility, a purpose to which the pursuit is in some measure referred, as in architecture, invariably degrades, because then the theoretic part of the art is comparatively lost sight of; and thus architecture takes a level below that of sculpture or painting, even when the powers of mind developed in it are of the same high order.

When we pronounce the name of Giotto, our venerant thoughts are at Assisi and Padua, before they climb the Campanile of Santa Maria del Fiore. And he who would raise the ghost of Michael Angelo, must haunt the Sistine and St. Lorenzo, not St. Peter's.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE THEORETIC FACULTY AS CONCERNED WITH PLEASURES OF SENSE.

§ 1. Explanation of the term "theoretic"

I PROCEED therefore first, to examine the nature of what I have called the Theoretic faculty, and to justify my substitution of the term "theoretic" for æsthetic, which is the one commonly employed with reference to it.

Now the term "æsthesis" properly signifies mere sensual perception of the outward qualities and necessary effects of bodies, in which sense only, if we would arrive at any accurate conclusions on this difficult subject, it should always be used. But I wholly deny that the impressions of beauty are in any way sensual,—they are neither sensual nor intellectual, but moral, and for the faculty receiving them, whose difference from mere perception I shall immediately endeavor to explain, no term can be more accurate or convenient than that employed by the Greeks, "theoretic," which I pray permission, therefore, always to use, and to call the operation of the faculty itself, Theoria.

§ 2. Of the differences of rank in pleasures of sense.

Let us begin at the lowest point, and observe, first, what differences of dignity may exist between different kinds of æsthetic or sensual pleasure, properly so called.

Now it is evident that the being common to brutes, or peculiar to man, can alone be no rational test of inferiority, or dignity in pleasures. We must not assume that man is the nobler animal, and then deduce the nobleness of his delights; but we must prove the nobleness of the delights, and thence the nobleness of the animal. The dignity of affection is no way lessened because a large measure of it may be found in lower animals, neither is the vileness of gluttony and lust abated because they are common to men. It is clear, therefore, that there is a standard of dignity

in the pleasures and passions themselves, by which we also class the creatures capable of, or suffering them.

§ 3. Use of the terms Temperate and Intemperate.

The first great distinction, we observe, is that noted of Aristotle, that men are called temperate and intemperate with regard to some, and not so with respect to others, and that those, with respect to which they are so called, are, by common consent, held to be the vilest. But Aristotle, though exquisitely subtle in his notation of facts, does not frequently give us satisfactory account of, or reason for them Content with stating the fact of these pleasures being held the lowest, he shows not why this estimation of them is just, and confuses the reader by observing casually respecting the higher pleasures, what is indeed true, but appears at first opposed to his own position, namely, that "men may be conceived, as also in these taking pleasure, either rightly, or more or less than is right."* Which being so, and evident capability of excess or defect existing in pleasures of this higher order, we ought to have been told how it happens that men are not called intemperate when they indulge in excess of this kind, and what is that difference in the nature of the pleasure which diminishes the criminality of its excess. This let us attempt to ascertain.

§ 4. Right use of the term "intemperate."

Men are held intemperate (ἀκόλαστοι,) only when their desires overcome or prevent the action of their reason, and they are indeed intemperate in the exact degree in which such prevention or interference takes place, and so are actually ἀκόλαστοι, in many instances, and with respect to many resolves, which lower not the world's estimation of their temperance. For so long as it can be supposed that the reason has acted imperfectly owing to its own imperfection, or to the imperfection of the premises submitted to it, (as when men give an inordinate preference to their own pursuits, because they cannot, in the nature of things, have sufficiently experienced the goodness and benefit of others,) and so long as it may be presumed that men have referred to reason in what they do, and have not suffered its orders to be disobeyed through mere impulse and desire, (though those orders may be full of error owing to the reason's own feebleness,) so long men are not held intemperate But when it is palpably evident that the reason cannot have erred

* ὡς δεῖ, καὶ καθ' ὑπερβολὴν καὶ ἐλλειψιν

but that its voice has been deadened or disobeyed, and that the reasonable creature has been dragged dead round the walls of his own citadel by mere passion and impulse,—then, and then only, men are of all held intemperate. And this is evidently the case with respect to inordinate indulgence in pleasures of touch and taste, for these, being destructive in their continuance not only of all other pleasures, but of the very sensibilities by which they themselves are received, and as this penalty is actually known and experienced by those indulging in them, so that the reason cannot but pronounce right respecting their perilousness, there is no palliation of the wrong choice; and the man, as utterly incapable of will,* is called intemperate, or ἀκόλαστος.

It would be well if the reader would for himself follow out this subject, which it would be irrelevant here to pursue farther, observing how a certain degree of intemperance is suspected and attributed to men with respect to higher impulses; as, for instance, in the case of anger, or any other passion criminally indulged, and yet is not so attributed, as in the case of sensual pleasures; because in anger the reason is supposed not to have had time to operate, and to be itself affected by the presence of the passion, which seizes the man involuntarily and before he is aware; whereas, in the case of the sensual pleasures, the act is deliberate, and determined on beforehand, in direct defiance of reason. Nevertheless, if no precaution be taken against immoderate anger, and the passions gain upon the man, so as to be evidently wilful and unrestrained, and admitted contrary to all reason, we begin to look upon him as, in the real sense of the word, intemperate, or ἀκόλαστος, and assign to him, in consequence, his place among the beasts, as definitely as if he had yielded to the pleasurable temptations of touch or taste.

§ 5. Grounds of inferiority in the pleasures which are subjects of intemperance.

We see, then, that the primal ground of inferiority in these pleasures is that which *proves* their indulgence to be contrary to reason; namely, their destructiveness upon prolongation, and their incapability of co-existing continually with other delights or perfections of the system.

And this incapability of continuance directs us to the second cause of their inferiority; namely, that they are given to we as

* Comp. Hooker, Eccl. Pol. Book i. chap. 8.

subservient to life, as instruments of our preservation—compelling us to seek the things necessary to our being, and that, therefore, when this their function is fully performed, they ought to have an end; and can be only artificially, and under high penalty, prolonged. But the pleasures of sight and hearing are given as gifts. They answer not any purposes of mere existence, for the distinction of all that is useful or dangerous to us might be made, and often is made, by the eye, without its receiving the slightest pleasure of sight. We might have learned to distinguish fruits and grain from flowers, without having any superior pleasure in the aspect of the latter. And the ear might have learned to distinguish the sounds that communicate ideas, or to recognize intimations of elemental danger without perceiving either music in the voice, or majesty in the thunder. And as these pleasures have no function to perform, so there is no limit to their continuance in the accomplishment of their end, for they are an end in themselves, and so may be perpetual with all of us—being in no way destructive, but rather increasing in exquisiteness by repetition.

§ 6. Evidence of higher rank in pleasures of sight and hearing.

Herein, then, we find very sufficient ground for the higher estimation of these delights, first, in their being eternal and inexhaustible, and secondly, in their being evidently no means or instrument of life, but an object of life. Now in whatever is an object of life, in whatever may be infinitely and for itself desired, we may be sure there is something of divine, for God will not make anything an object of life to his creatures which does not point to, or partake of, Himself. And so, though we were to regard the pleasures of sight merely as the highest of sensual pleasures, and though they were of rare occurrence, and, when occurring, isolated and imperfect, there would still be a supernatural character about them, owing to their permanence and self-sufficiency, where no other sensual pleasures are permanent or self-sufficient. But when, instead of being scattered, interrupted, or chance-distributed, they are gathered together, and so arranged to enhance each other as by chance they could not be, there is caused by them not only a feeling of strong affection towards the object in which they exist, but a perception of purpose and adaptation of it to our desires;

a perception, therefore, of the immediate operation of the Intelligence which so formed us, and so feeds us.

Out of which perception arise joy, admiration, and gratitude.

Now the mere animal consciousness of the pleasantness I call æsthesis; but the exulting, reverent, and grateful perception of it I call theoria. For this, and this only, is the full comprehension and contemplation of the beautiful as a gift of God, a gift not necessary to our being, but added to, and elevating it, and twofold, first of the desire, and secondly of the thing desired.

§ 7. How the lower pleasures may be elevated in rank.

And that this joyfulness and reverence are a necessary part of theoretic pleasure is very evident when we consider that, by the presence of these feelings, even the lower and more sensual pleasures may be rendered theoretic. Thus Aristotle has subtly noted, that "we call not men intemperate so much with respect to the scents of roses or herb-perfumes as of ointments and of condiments," (though the reason that he gives for this be futile enough.) For the fact is, that of scents artificially prepared the extreme desire is intemperance, but of natural and God-given scents, which take their part in the harmony and pleasantness of creation, there can hardly be intemperance; not that there is any absolute difference between the two kinds, but that these are likely to be received with gratitude and joyfulness rather than those, so that we despise the seeking of essences and unguents, but not the sowing of violets along our garden banks. But all things may be elevated by affection, as the spikenard of Mary, and in the Song of Solomon, the myrrh upon the handles of the lock, and that of Isaac concerning his son. And the general law for all these pleasures is, that when sought in the abstract and ardently, they are foul things, but when received with thankfulness and with reference to God's glory, they become theoretic; and so I can find something divine in the sweetness of wild fruits, as well as in the pleasantness of the pure air, and the tenderness of its natural perfumes that come and go as they list.

§ 8. Ideas of beauty how essentially moral.

It will be understood why I formerly said in the chapter respecting ideas of beauty, that those ideas were the subject of moral and not of intellectual, nor altogether of sensual perception: and why I spoke of the pleasures connected with them as derived from "those material sources

which are agreeable to our moral nature in its purity and perfection." For, as it is necessary to the existence of an idea of beauty, that the sensual pleasure which may be its basis, should be accompanied first with joy, then with love of the object, then with the perception of kindness in a superior Intelligence, finally with thankfulness and veneration towards that Intelligence itself, and as no idea can be at all considered as in any way an idea of beauty, until it be made up of these emotions, any more than we can be said to have an idea of a letter of which we perceive the perfume and the fair writing, without understanding the contents of it, or intent of it; and as these emotions are in no way resultant from, nor obtainable by, any operation of the intellect, it is evident that the sensation of beauty is not sensual on the one hand, nor is it intellectual on the other, but is dependent on a pure, right, and open state of the heart, both for its truth and for its intensity, insomuch that even the right after action of the intellect upon facts of beauty so apprehended, is dependent on the acuteness of the heart feeling about them; and thus the Apostolic words come true, in this minor respect as in all others, that men are alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, having the understanding darkened because of the hardness of their hearts, and so being past feeling, give themselves up to lasciviousness; for we do indeed see constantly that men having naturally acute perceptions of the beautiful, yet not receiving it with a pure heart, nor into their hearts at all, never comprehend it, nor receive good from it, but make it a mere minister to their desires, and accompaniment and seasoning of lower sensual pleasures, until all their emotions take the same earthly stamp, and the sense of beauty sinks into the servant of lust.

§ 9. How degraded by heartless reception.

Nor is what the world commonly understands by the cultivation of taste, anything more or better than this, at least in times of corrupt and over-pampered civilization, when men build palaces and plant groves and gather luxuries, that they and their devices may hang in the corners of the world like fine-spun cobwebs, with greedy, puffed-up, spider-like lusts in the middle. And this, which in Christian times is the abuse and corruption of the sense of beauty, was in that Pagan life of which St. Paul speaks, little less than the essence of it, and the best they had; for I know not that of the expressions

of affection towards external nature to be found among Heathen writers, there are any of which the balance and leading thought cleaves not towards the sensual parts of her. Her beneficence they sought, and her power they shunned, her teaching through both, they understood never. The pleasant influences of soft winds and ringing streamlets, and shady coverts; of the violet couch, and plane-tree shade,* they received, perhaps, in a more noble way than we, but they found not anything except fear, upon the bare mountain, or in the ghostly glen. The Hybla heather they loved more for its sweet hives than its purple hues. But the Christian theoria seeks not, though it accepts, and touches with its own purity, what the Epicurean sought, but finds its food and the objects of its love everywhere, in what is harsh and fearful, as well as what is kind, nay, even in all that seems coarse and commonplace; seizing that which is good, and delighting more sometimes at finding its table spread in strange places, and in the presence of its enemies, and its honey coming out of the rock, than if all were harmonized into a less wondrous pleasure; hating only what is self-sighted and insolent of men's work, despising all that is not of God, unless reminding it of God, yet able to find evidence of him still, where all seems forgetful of him, and to turn that into a witness of his working which was meant to obscure it, and so with clear and unoffended sight beholding him forever, according to the written promise,—Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

§ 10. How exalted by affection.

* Plato. Phædrus, § 9.

CHAPTER III.

OF ACCURACY AND INACCURACY IN IMPRESSIONS OF SENSE.

§ 1. By what test is the health of the perceptive faculty to be determined?

HITHERTO we have observed only the distinctions of dignity among pleasures of sense, considered merely as such, and the way in which any of them may become theoretic in being received with right feeling.

But as we go farther, and examine the distinctive nature of ideas of beauty, we shall, I believe, perceive something in them besides æsthetic pleasure, which attests a more important function belonging to them than attaches to other sensual ideas, and exhibits a more exalted character in the faculty by which they are received. And this was what I alluded to, when I said in the chapter already referred to (§ 1,) that "we may indeed perceive, as far as we are acquainted with the nature of God, that we have been so constructed as in a healthy state of mind to derive pleasure from whatever things are illustrative of that nature."

This point it is necessary now farther to develop.

Our first inquiry must evidently be, how we are authorized to affirm of any man's mind, respecting impressions of sight, that it is in a healthy state or otherwise. What canon or test is there by which we may determine of these impressions that they are or are not *rightly* esteemed beautiful. To what authority, when men are at variance with each other on this subject, shall it be deputed to judge which is right? or is there any such authority or canon at all?

For it does not at first appear easy to prove that men ought to like one thing rather than another, and although this is granted generally by men's speaking of bad or good taste, it is frequently denied when we pass to particulars, by the assertion of each individual that he has a right to his opinion—a right which is sometimes claimed even in moral matters, though then palpably with-

out foundation, but which does not appear altogether irrational in matters æsthetic, wherein little operation of voluntary choice is supposed possible. It would appear strange, for instance, to assert, respecting a particular person who preferred the scent of violets to roses, that he had no right to do so. And yet, while I have said that the sensation of beauty is intuitive and necessary, as men derive pleasure from the scent of a rose, I have assumed that there are some sources from which it is rightly derived, and others from which it is wrongly derived, in other words that men have no right to think some things beautiful, and no right to remain apathetic with regard to others.

§ 2. And in what sense may the terms Right and Wrong be attached to its conclusions?

Hence then arise two questions, according to the sense in which the word right is taken; the first, in what way an impression of sense may be deceptive, and therefore a conclusion respecting it untrue; and the second, in what way an impression of sense, or the preference of one, may be a subject of will, and therefore of moral duty or delinquency.

To the first of these questions, I answer that we cannot speak of the immediate impression of sense as false, nor of its preference to others as mistaken, for no one can be deceived respecting the actual sensation he perceives or prefers. But falsity may attach to his assertion or supposition, either that what he himself perceives is from the same object perceived by others, or is always to be by himself perceived, or is always to be by himself preferred; and when we speak of a man as wrong in his impressions of sense, we either mean that he feels differently from all, or a majority, respecting a certain object, or that he prefers at present those of his impressions, which ultimately he will not prefer.

To the second I answer, that over immediate impressions and immediate preferences we have no power, but over ultimate impressions, and especially ultimate proferences we have; and that, though we can neither at once choose whether we shall see an object, red, green, or blue, nor determine to like the red better than the blue, or the blue better than the red, yet we can, if we choose, make ourselves ultimately susceptible of such impressions in other degrees, and capable of pleasures in them in different measure; and because, wherever power of any kind is given,

there is responsibility attached, it is the duty of men to prefer certain impressions of sense to others, because they have the power of doing so, this being precisely analogous to the law of the moral world, whereby men are supposed not only capable of governing their likes and dislikes, but the whole culpability or propriety of actions is dependent upon this capability, so that men are guilty or otherwise, not for what they do, but for what they desire, the command being not, thou shalt obey, but thou shalt love, the Lord thy God, which, if men were not capable of governing and directing their affections, would be the command of an impossibility.

§ 3. What power we have over impressions of sense.

I assert, therefore, that even with respect to impressions of sense, we have a power of preference, and a corresponding duty, and I shall show first the nature of the power, and afterwards the nature of the duty.

Let us take an instance from one of the lowest of the senses, and observe the kind of power we have over the impressions of lingual taste. On the first offering of two different things to the palate, it is not in our power to prevent or command the instinctive preference. One will be unavoidably and helplessly preferred to the other. But if the same two things be submitted to judgment frequently and attentively, it will be often found that their relations change. The palate, which at first perceived only the coarse and violent qualities of either, will, as it becomes more experienced, acquire greater subtilty and delicacy of discrimination, perceiving in both agreeable or disagreeable qualities at first unnoticed, which on continued experience will probably become more influential than the first impressions; and whatever this final verdict may be, it is felt by the person who gives it, and received by others as a more correct one than the first.

§ 4. Depends on acuteness of attention.

So, then, the power we have over the preference of impressions of taste is not actual nor immediate, but only a power of testing and comparing them frequently and carefully, until that which is the more permanent, the more consistently agreeable, be determined. But when the instrument of taste is thus in some degree perfected and rendered subtile, by its being practised upon a single object, its conclusions will be more rapid with respect to others, and it will be able to distinguish more quickly in other things, and even to prefer at

once, those qualities which are calculated finally to give it most pleasure, though more capable with respect to those on which it is more frequently exercised; whence people are called judges with respect to this or that particular object of taste.

§ 5. Ultimate conclusions universal.

Now that verdicts of this kind are received as authoritative by others, proves another and more important fact, namely, that not only changes of opinion take place in consequence of experience, but that those changes are from variation of opinion to unity of opinion; and that whatever may be the differences of estimate among unpractised or uncultivated tastes, there will be unity of taste among the experienced. And that therefore the operation of repeated trial and experience is to arrive at principles of preference in some sort common to all, and which are a part of our nature.

I have selected the sense of taste for an instance, because it is the least favorable to the position I hold, since there is more latitude allowed, and more actual variety of verdict in the case of this sense than of any other; and yet, however susceptible of variety even the ultimate approximations of its preferences may be, the authority of judges is distinctly allowed, and we hear every day the admission, by those of unpractised palate, that they are, or may be wrong in their opinions respecting the real pleasurableness of things either to themselves, or to others.

§ 6. What duty is attached to this power over impressions of sense.

The sense, however, in which they thus use the word "wrong" is merely that of falseness or inaccuracy in conclusion, not of moral delinquency. But there is, as I have stated, a duty, more or less imperative, attached to every power we possess, and therefore to this power over the lower senses as well as to all others.

And this duty is evidently to bring every sense into that state of cultivation, in which it shall both form the truest conclusions respecting all that is submitted to it, and procure us the greatest amount of pleasure consistent with its due relation to other senses and functions. Which three constituents of perfection in sense, true judgment, maximum sensibility, and right relation to others, are invariably co-existent and involved one by the other, for the true judgment is the result of the high sensibility, and the high sensibility of the right relation. Thus, for instance, with respect to pleasures of taste, it is our duty not to devote

such inordinate attention to the discrimination of them as must be inconsistent with our pursuit, and destructive of our capacity, of higher and preferable pleasures, but to cultivate the sense of them in that way which is consistent with all other good, by temperance, namely, and by such attention as the mind at certain resting moments may fitly pay even to so ignoble a source of pleasure as this, by which discipline we shall bring the faculty of taste itself to its real maximum of sensibility; for it may not be doubted but that health, hunger, and such general refinement of bodily habits as shall make the body a perfect and fine instrument in all respects, are better promoters of actual sensual enjoyment of taste, than the sickened, sluggish, hard-stimulated fastidiousness of Epicurism.

§ 7. How rewarded.

So also it will certainly be found with all the senses, that they individually receive the greatest and purest pleasure when they are in right condition and degree of subordination to all the rest; and that by the over cultivation of any one, (for morbid sources of pleasure and correspondent temptations to irrational indulgence, confessedly are attached to all,) we shall add more to their power as instruments of punishment than of pleasure.

We see then, in this example of the lowest sense, that the power we have over sensations and preferences depends mainly on the exercise of attention through certain prolonged periods, and that by this exercise, we arrive at ultimate, constant, and common sources of agreeableness, casting off those which are external, accidental, and individual.

§ 8. Especially with respect to ideas of beauty.

That then which is required in order to the attainment of accurate conclusions respecting the essence of the beautiful, is nothing more than earnest, loving, and unselfish attention to our impressions of it, by which those which are shallow, false, or peculiar to times and temperaments, may be distinguished from those that are eternal. And this dwelling upon, and fond contemplation of them, (the anschauung of the Germans,) is perhaps as much as was meant by the Greek theoria; and it is indeed a very noble exercise of the souls of men, and one by which they are peculiarly distinguished from the anima of lower creatures, which cannot, I think, be proved to have any capacity of contemplation at all, but only a restless

vividness of perception and conception, the "fancy" of Hooker (Eccl. Pol. Book i. Chap. vi. 2.) And yet this dwelling upon them comes not up to that which I wish to express by the word theoria, unless it be accompanied by full perception of their being a gift from and manifestation of God, and by all those other nobler emotions before described, since not until so felt is their essential nature comprehended.

§ 9. Errors induced by the power of habit

But two very important points are to be observed respecting the direction and discipline of the attention in the early stages of judgment. The first, that, for many beneficent purposes, the nature of man has been made reconcilable by custom to many things naturally painful to it, and even improper for it; and that therefore, though by continued experience, united with thought, we may discover that which is best of several, yet if we submit ourselves to authority or fashion, and close our eyes, we may be by custom made to tolerate, and even to love and long for, that which is naturally painful and pernicious to us, whence arise incalculable embarrassments on the subject of art.

§ 10. The necessity of submission in early stages of judgment.

The second, that, in order to the discovery of that which is best of two things, it is necessary that both should be equally submitted to the attention; and therefore that we should have so much faith in authority as shall make us repeatedly observe and attend to that which is said to be right, even though at present we may not feel it so. And in the right mingling of this faith with the openness of heart, which proves all things, lies the great difficulty of the cultivation of the taste, as far as the spirit of the scholar is concerned, though even when he has this spirit, he may be long retarded by having evil examples submitted to him by ignorant masters.

The temper, therefore, by which right taste is formed, is first, patient. It dwells upon what is submitted to it, it does not trample upon it lest it should be pearls, even though it look like husks, it is a good ground, soft, penetrable, retentive, it does not send up thorns of unkind thoughts, to choke the weak seed, it is hungry and thirsty too, and drinks all the dew that falls on it, it is an honest and good heart, that shows no too ready springing before the sun be up, but fails not afterwards; it is distrustful of itself, so as to be ready to believe and to try all things, and yet

so trustful of itself, that it will neither quit what it has tried, nor take anything without trying. And that pleasure which it has in things that it finds true and good, is so great that it cannot possibly be led aside by any tricks of fashion, nor diseases of vanity, it cannot be cramped in its conclusions by partialities and hypocrisies, its visions and its delights are too penetrating. too living, for any white-washed object or shallow fountain long to endure or supply. It clasps all that it loves so hard, that it crushes it if it be hollow.

§ 11. The large scope of matured judgment.

Now, the conclusions of this disposition are sure to be eventually right, more and more right according to the general maturity of all the powers, but it is sure to come right at last, because its operation is in analogy to, and in harmony with, the whole spirit of the Christian moral system, and that which it will ultimately love and rest in, are great sources of happiness common to all the human race, and based on the relations they hold to their Creator.

These common and general sources of pleasure are, I believe, a certain seal, or impress of divine work and character, upon whatever God has wrought in all the world; only, it being necessary for the perception of them, that their contraries should also be set before us, these divine qualities, though inseparable from all divine works, are yet suffered to exist in such varieties of degree, that their most limited manifestation shall, in opposition to their most abundant, act as a foil or contrary, just as we conceive of cold as contrary to heat, though the most extreme cold we can produce or conceive is not inconsistent with an unknown amount of heat in the body.

§ 12. How distinguishable from false taste.

Our purity of taste, therefore, is best tested by its universality, for if we can only admire this thing or that, we may be sure that our cause for liking is of a finite and false nature. But if we can perceive beauty in everything of God's doing, we may argue that we have reached the true perception of its universal laws. Hence, false taste may be known by its fastidiousness, by its demands of pomp, splendor, and unusual combination, by its enjoyment only of particular styles and modes of things, and by its pride also, for it is forever meddling, mending, accumulating, and self-exulting, its eye is always upon itself, and it tests all things around it by the way

they fit it. But true taste is forever growing, learning, reading, worshipping, laying its hand upon its mouth because it is astonished, casting its shoes from off its feet because it finds all ground holy, lamenting over itself and testing itself by the way that it fits things. And it finds whereof to feed, and whereby to grow, in all things, and therefore the complaint so often made by young artists that they have not within their reach materials, or subjects enough for their fancy, is utterly groundless, and the sign only of their own blindness and inefficiency; for there is that to be seen in every street and lane of every city, that to be felt and found in every human heart and countenance, that to be loved in every road-side weed and moss-grown wall, which in the hands of faithful men, may convey emotions of glory and sublimity continual and exalted.

§ 13. The danger of a spirit of choice.

Let therefore the young artist beware of the spirit of choice,* it is an insolent spirit at the best and commonly a base and blind one too, checking all progress and blasting all power, encouraging weaknesses, pampering partialities, and teaching us to look to accidents of nature for the help and the joy which should come from our own hearts. He draws nothing well who thirsts not to draw *every*thing; when a good painter shrinks, it is because he is humbled, not fastidious, when he stops, it is because he is surfeited, and not because he thinks nature has given him unkindly food, or that he fears famine.† I have seen a man of true taste pause for a quarter of an hour to look at the channellings that recent rain had traced in a heap of cinders.

§ 14. And criminality.

And here is evident another reason of that duty which we owe respecting impressions of sight, namely, to discipline ourselves to the enjoyment of those which are eternal in their nature, not only because these are the most acute, but because they are the most easily, constantly, and unselfishly attainable. For had it been ordained by the Almighty that the highest pleasures of sight should be those of most difficult attainment, and that to arrive at them it should be necessary to accu-

* "Nothing comes amiss,—
A good digestion turneth all to health."—G. HERBERT.

† Yet note the difference between the choice that comes of pride, and the choice that comes of love, and compare Chap. xv. § 6.

mulate gilded palaces tower over tower, and pile artificial mountains around insinuated lakes, there would have been a direct contradiction between the unselfish duties and inherent desires of every individual. But no such contradiction exists in the system of Divine Providence, which, leaving it open to us, if we will, as creatures in probation, to abuse this sense like every other, and pamper it with selfish and thoughtless vanities as we pamper the palate with deadly meats, until the appetite of tasteful cruelty is lost in its sickened satiety, incapable of pleasure unless, Caligula like, it concentrate the labor of a million of lives into the sensation of an hour, leaves it also open to us, by humble and loving ways, to make ourselves susceptible of deep delight from the meanest objects of creation, and of a delight which shall not separate us from our fellows, nor require the sacrifice of any duty or occupation, but which shall bind us closer to men and to God, and be with us always, harmonized with every action, consistent with every claim, unchanging and eternal.

§ 15. How certain conclusions respecting beauty are by reason demonstrable.

Seeing then that these qualities of material objects which are calculated to give us this universal pleasure, are demonstrably constant in their address to human nature, they must belong in some measure to whatever has been esteemed beautiful throughout successive ages of the world (and they are also by their definition common to all the works of God.) Therefore it is evident that it must be possible to reason them out, as well as to feel them out; possible to divest every object of that which makes it accidentally or temporarily pleasant, and to strip it bare of distinctive qualities, until we arrive at those which it has in common with all other beautiful things, which we may then safely affirm to be the cause of its ultimate and true delightfulness.

§ 16. With what liabilities to error.

Now this process of reasoning will be that which I shall endeavor to employ in the succeeding investigations, a process perfectly safe, so long as we are quite sure that we are reasoning concerning objects which produce in us one and the same sensation, but not safe if the sensation produced be of a different nature, though it may be equally agreeable; for what produces a different sensation must be a different cause. And the difficulty of reasoning respecting beauty arises chiefly from the ambiguity of the word, which stands in different

people's minds for totally different sensations, for which there can be no common cause.

When, for instance, Mr. Alison endeavors to support his position that "no man is sensible to beauty in those objects with regard to which he has not previous ideas," by the remark that "the beauty of a theory, or of a relic of antiquity, is unintelligible to a peasant" we see at once that it is hopeless to argue with a man who, under his general term beauty, may, for anything we know, be sometimes speaking of mathematical demonstrability and sometimes of historical interest; while even if we could succeed in limiting the term to the sense of external attractiveness, there would be still room for many phases of error; for though the beauty of a snowy mountain and of a human cheek or forehead, so far as both are considered as mere matter, is the same, and traceable to certain qualities of color and line, common to both, and by reason extricable, yet the flush of the cheek and moulding of the brow, as they express modesty, affection, or intellect, possess sources of agreeableness which are not common to the snowy mountain, and the interference of whose influence we must be cautious to prevent in our examination of those which are material and universal.*

§ 17. The term "beauty" how limitable in the outset. Divided into typical and vital.

The first thing, then, that we have to do, is accurately to discriminate and define those appearances from which we are about to reason as belonging to beauty, properly so called, and to clear the ground of all the confused ideas and erroneous theories with which the misapprehension or metaphorical use of the term has encumbered it.

By the term beauty, then, properly are signified two things. First, that external quality of bodies already so often spoken of, and which, whether it occur in a stone, flower, beast, or in man, is absolutely identical, which, as I have already asserted, may be shown to be in some sort typical of the Divine attributes, and which, therefore, I shall, for distinction's sake, call typical beauty; and, secondarily, the appearance of felicitous fulfilment of function in living things, more especially of the joyful and right exer-

* Compare Spenser. (Hymn to Beauty.)

"But ah, believe me, there is more than so,
That works such wonders in the minds of men."

tion of perfect life in man. And this kind of beauty I shall call vital beauty.

Any application of the word beautiful to other appearances or qualities than these, is either false or metaphorical, as, for instance, to the splendor of a discovery, the fitness of a proportion, the coherence of a chain of reasoning, or the power of bestowing pleasure which objects receive from association, a power confessedly great, and interfering, as we shall presently find, in a most embarrassing way with the attractiveness of inherent beauty.

But in order that the mind of the reader may not be biassed at the outset by that which he may happen to have received of current theories respecting beauty, founded on the above metaphorical uses of the word, (theories which are less to be reprobated as accounting falsely for the sensations of which they treat, than as confusing two or more pleasurable sensations together,) I shall briefly glance at the four erroneous positions most frequently held upon this subject, before proceeding to examine those typical and vital properties of things, to which I conceive that all our original conceptions of beauty may be traced.

CHAPTER IV.

OF FALSE OPINIONS HELD CONCERNING BEAUTY.

I PURPOSE at present to speak only of four of the more current opinions respecting beauty, for of the errors connected with the pleasurableness of proportion, and of the expression of right feelings in the countenance, I shall have opportunity to treat in the succeeding chapters; (compare Ch. VI. Ch. XVI.)

§ 1. Of the false opinion that truth is beauty, and vice versa.

Those erring or inconsistent positions which I would at once dismiss are, the first, that the beautiful is the true, the second, that the beautiful is the useful, the third, that it is dependent on custom, and the fourth, that it is dependent on the association of ideas.

To assert that the beautiful is the true, appears, at first, like asserting that propositions are matter, and matter propositions. But giving the best and most rational interpretation we can, and supposing the holders of this strange position to mean only that things are beautiful which appear what they indeed are, and ugly which appear what they are not, we find them instantly contradicted by each and every conclusion of experience. A stone looks as truly a stone as a rose looks a rose, and yet is not so beautiful; a cloud may look more like a castle than a cloud, and be the more beautiful on that account. The mirage of the desert is fairer than its sands; the false image of the under heaven fairer than the sea. I am at a loss to know how any so untenable a position could ever have been advanced; but it may, perhaps, have arisen from some confusion of the beauty of art with the beauty of nature, and from an illogical expansion of the very certain truth, that nothing is beautiful in art, which, professing to be an imitation, or a statement, is not as such in some sort true.

§ 2. Of the false opinion that beauty is use

That the beautiful is the useful, is an assertion evidently based on that limited and false sense of the

fulness. Compare Chap. xii. § 5.

latter term which I have already deprecated. As it is the most degrading and dangerous supposition which can be advanced on the subject, so, fortunately, it is the most palpably absurd. It is to confound admiration with hunger, love with lust, and life with sensation; it is to assert that the human creature has no ideas and no feelings, except those ultimately referable to its brutal appetites. It has not a single fact nor appearance of fact to support it, and needs no combating, at least until its advocates have obtained the consent of the majority of mankind, that the most beautiful productions of nature are seeds and roots; and of art, spades and millstones.

§ 3. Of the false opinion that beauty results from custom. Compare Chap. vi. § 1.

Somewhat more rational grounds appear for the assertion that the sense of the beautiful arises from familiarity with the object, though even this could not long be maintained by a thinking person. For all that can be alleged in defence of such a supposition is, that familiarity deprives some objects which at first appeared ugly, of much of their repulsiveness, whence it is as rational to conclude that familiarity is the cause of beauty, as it would be to argue that because it is possible to acquire a taste for olives, therefore custom is the cause of lusciousness in grapes. Nevertheless, there are some phenomena resulting from the tendency of our nature to be influenced by habit of which it may be well to observe the limits.

§ 4. The twofold operation of custom. It deadens sensation, but confirms affection.

Custom has a twofold operation: the one to deaden the frequency and force of repeated impressions, the other to endear the familiar object to the affections. Commonly, where the mind is vigorous, and the power of sensation very perfect, it has rather the last operation than the first; with meaner minds, the first takes place in the higher degree, so that they are commonly characterized by a desire of excitement, and the want of the loving, fixed, theoretic power. But both take place in some degree with all men, so that as life advances, impressions of all kinds become less rapturous owing to their repetition. It is however beneficently ordained that repulsiveness shall be diminished by custom in a far greater degree than the sensation of beauty, so that the anatomist in a little time loses all sense of horror in the torn flesh, and carous bone, while the sculptor ceases not to feel to the close of his life, the deliciousness of every line of the outward frame. So then as in that with which

we are made familiar, the repulsiveness is constantly diminishing, and such claims as it may be able to put forth on the affections are daily becoming stronger, while in what is submitted to us of new or strange, that which may be repulsive is felt in its full force, while no hold is as yet laid on the affections, there is a very strong preference induced in most minds for that to which they are accustomed over that they know not, and this is strongest in those which are least open to sensations of positive beauty. But however far this operation may be carried, its utmost effect is but the deadening and approximating the sensations of beauty and ugliness. It never mixes nor crosses, nor in any way alters them; it has not the slightest connection with nor power over their nature. By tasting two wines alternately, we may deaden our perception of their flavor; nay, we may even do more than can ever be done in the case of sight, we may confound the two flavors together. But it will hardly be argued therefore that custom is the cause of either flavor. And so, though by habit we may deaden the effect of ugliness or beauty, it is not for that reason to be affirmed that habit is the cause of either sensation. We may keep a skull beside us as long as we please, we may overcome its repulsiveness, we may render ourselves capable of perceiving many qualities of beauty about its lines, we may contemplate it for years together if we will, it and nothing else, but we shall not get ourselves to think as well of it as of a child's fair face.

§ 5. But never either creates or destroys the essence of beauty.

It would be easy to pursue the subject farther, but I believe that every thoughtful reader will be perfectly well able to supply farther illustrations, and sweep away the sandy foundations of the opposite theory, unassisted. Let it, however, be observed, that in spite of all custom, an Englishman instantly acknowledges, and at first sight, the superiority of the turban to the hat, or of the plaid to the coat, that whatever the dictates of immediate fashion may compel, the superior gracefulness of the Greek or middle age costumes is invariably felt, and that, respecting what has been asserted of negro nations looking with disgust on the white face, no importance whatever is to be attached to the opinions of races who have never received any ideas of beauty whatsoever, (these ideas being only received by minds under some certain degree of cultivation,) and whose disgust arises naturally from what they

§ 6. Instances

may suppose to be a sign of weakness or ill health. It would be futile to proceed into farther detail. I pass to the last and most weighty theory, that the agreeableness in objects which we call beauty is the result of the association with them of agreeable or interesting ideas.

§ 7. Of the false opinion that beauty depends on the association of ideas.

Frequent has been the support, and wide the acceptance of this supposition, and yet I suppose that no two consecutive sentences were ever written in defence of it, without involving either a contradiction or a confusion of terms. Thus Alison, "There are scenes undoubtedly more beautiful than Runnymede, yet to those who recollect the great event that passed there, there is no scene perhaps which so strongly seizes on the imagination." Where we are wonder-struck at the audacious obtuseness which would prove the power of imagination by its overcoming that very other power (of inherent beauty) whose existence the arguer denies. For the only logical conclusion which can possibly be drawn from the above sentence is, that imagination is *not* the source of beauty, for although no scene seizes so strongly on the imagination, yet there are scenes "more beautiful than Runnymede." And though instances of self-contradiction as laconic and complete as this are to be found in few writers except Alison, yet if the arguments on the subject be fairly sifted from the mass of confused language with which they are always encumbered and placed in logical form, they will be found invariably to involve one of these two syllogisms, either, association gives pleasure, and beauty gives pleasure, therefore association is beauty. Or, the power of association is stronger than the power of beauty, therefore the power of association *is* the power of beauty.

§ 8. Association. Is, 1st, rational. It is of no efficiency as a cause of beauty.

Nevertheless it is necessary for us to observe the real value and authority of association in the moral system, and how ideas of actual beauty may be affected by it, otherwise we shall be liable to embarrassment throughout the whole of the succeeding argument.

Association is of two kinds. Rational and accidental. By rational association I understand the interest which any object may bear historically as having been in some way connected with the affairs or affections of men; an interest shared in the minds of all who are aware of such connection: which to call beauty is mere

and gross confusion of terms, it is no theory to be confuted, but a misuse of language to be set aside, a misuse involving the positions that in uninhabited countries the vegetation has no grace, the rock no dignity, the cloud no color, and that the snowy summits of the Alps receive no loveliness from the sunset light, because they have not been polluted by the wrath, ravage, and misery of men.

§ 9. Association accidental. The extent of its influence.

By accidental association, I understand the accidental connection of ideas and memories with material things, owing to which those material things are regarded as agreeable or otherwise, according to the nature of the feelings or recollections they summon; the association being commonly involuntary and oftentimes so vague as that no distinct image is suggested by the object, but we feel a painfulness in it or pleasure from it, without knowing wherefore. Of this operation of the mind (which is that of which I spoke as causing inextricable embarrassments on the subject of beauty) the experience is constant, so that its more energetic manifestations require no illustration. But I do not think that the minor degrees and shades of this great influence have been sufficiently appreciated. Not only all vivid emotions and all circumstances of exciting interest leave their light and shadow on the senseless things and instruments among which or through whose agency they have been felt or learned, but I believe that the eye cannot rest on a material form, in a moment of depression or exultation, without communicating to that form a spirit and a life, a life which will make it afterwards in some degree loved or feared, a charm or a painfulness for which we shall be unable to account even to ourselves, which will not indeed be perceptible, except by its delicate influence on our judgment in cases of complicated beauty. Let the eye but rest on a rough piece of branch of curious form during a conversation with a friend, rest, however, unconsciously, and though the conversation be forgotten, though every circumstance connected with it be as utterly lost to the memory as though it had not been, yet the eye will, through the whole life after, take a certain pleasure in such boughs which it had not before, a pleasure so slight, a trace of feeling so delicate as to leave us utterly unconscious of its peculiar power, but undestroyable by any reasoning, a part, thenceforward, of our constitution, destroyable only by the same arbi-

trary process of association by which it was created. Reason has no effect upon it whatsoever. And there is probably no one opinion which is formed by any of us, in matters of taste, which is not in some degree influenced by unconscious association of this kind. In many who have no definite rules of judgment, preference is decided by little else, and thus, unfortunately, its operations are mistaken for, or rather substituted for, those of inherent beauty, and its real position and value in the moral system is in a great measure overlooked.

§ 10. The dignity of its function.

For I believe that mere pleasure and pain have less associative power than duty performed or omitted, and that the great use of the associative faculty is not to add beauty to material things, but to add force to the conscience. But for this external and all-powerful witness, the voice of the inward guide might be lost in each particular instance, almost as soon as disobeyed; the echo of it in after time, whereby, though perhaps feeble as warning, it becomes powerful as punishment, might be silenced, and the strength of the protection pass away in the lightness of the lash. Therefore it has received the power of enlisting external and unmeaning things in its aid, and transmitting to all that is indifferent its own authority to reprove or reward, so that, as we travel the way of life, we have the choice, according to our working, of turning all the voices of nature into one song of rejoicing, and all her lifeless creatures into a glad company, whereof the meanest shall be beautiful in our eyes, by its kind message, or of withering and quenching her sympathy into a fearful, withdrawn, silence of condemnation, or into a crying out of her stones, and a shaking of her dust against us. Nor is it any marvel that the theoretic faculty should be overpowered by this momentous operation, and the indifferent appeals and inherent glories of external things in the end overlooked, when the perfection of God's works is felt only as the sweetness of his promises, and their admirableness only as the threatenings of his power.

§ 11. How it is connected with impressions of beauty.

But it is evident that the full exercise of this noble function of the associative faculty is inconsistent with absolute and incontrovertible conclusions on subjects of theoretic preference. For it is quite impossible for any individual to distinguish in himself the unconscious underworking of indefinite association, peculiar to him individually, from those great

laws of choice under which he is comprehended with all his race. And it is well for us that it is so, the harmony of God's good work is not in us interrupted by this mingling of universal and peculiar principles; for by these such difference is secured in the feelings as shall make fellowship itself more delightful, by its inter-communicate character, and such variety of feeling also in each of us separately as shall make us capable of enjoying scenes of different kinds and orders, instead of morbidly seeking for some perfect epitome of the beautiful in one; and also that deadening by custom of theoretic impressions to which I have above alluded, is counterbalanced by the pleasantness of acquired association; and the loss of the intense feeling of the youth, which "had no need of a remoter charm, by thought supplied, or any interest, unborrowed from the eye," is replaced by the gladness of conscience, and the vigor of the reflecting and imaginative faculties, as they take their wide and aged grasp of the great relations between the earth and its dead people.

§ 12. And what caution it renders necessary in the examination of them.

In proportion therefore to the value, constancy, and efficiency of this influence, we must be modest and cautious in the pronouncing of positive opinions on the subject of beauty. For every one of us has peculiar sources of enjoyment necessarily opened to him in certain scenes and things, sources which are sealed to others, and we must be wary on the one hand, of confounding these in ourselves with ultimate conclusions of taste, and so forcing them upon all as authoritative, and on the other of supposing that the enjoyments of others which we cannot share are shallow or unwarrantable, because incommunicable. I fear, for instance, that in the former portion of this work I may have attributed too much community and authority to certain affections of my own for scenery inducing emotions of wild, impetuous, and enthusiastic characters, and too little to those which I perceive in others for things peaceful, humble, meditative, and solemn. So also between youth and age there will be found differences of seeking, which are not wrong, nor of false choice in either, but of different temperament, the youth sympathizing more with the gladness, fulness, and magnificence of things, and the gray hairs with their completion, sufficiency and repose. And so, neither condemning the delights of others, nor altogether distrustful of our own, we must advance, as

we live on, from what is brilliant to what is pure, and from what is promised to what is fulfilled, and from what is our strength to what is our crown, only observing in all things how that which is indeed wrong, and to be cut up from the root, is dislike, and not affection. For by the very nature of these beautiful qualities, which I have defined to be the signature of God upon his works, it is evident that in whatever we altogether dislike, we see not all; that the keenness of our vision is to be tested by the expansiveness of our love, and that as far as the influence of association has voice in the question, though it is indeed possible that the inevitable painfulness of an object, for which we can render no sufficient reason, may be owing to its recalling of a sorrow, it is more probably dependent on its accusation of a crime.

CHAPTER V

OF TYPICAL BEAUTY

1*st, of Infinity, or the type of Divine Incomprehensibility.*

§ 1. Impossibility of adequately treating the subject

THE subject being now in some measure cleared of embarrassment, let us briefly distinguish those qualities or types on whose combination is dependent the power of mere material loveliness. I pretend neither to enumerate nor perceive them all, for it may be generally observed that whatever good there may be, desirable by man, more especially good belonging to his moral nature, there will be a corresponding agreeableness in whatever external object reminds him of such good, whether it remind him by arbitrary association or by typical resemblance, and that the infinite ways, whether by reason or experience discoverable, by which matter in some sort may remind us of moral perfections, are hardly within any reasonable limits to be explained, if even by any single mind they might all be traced. Yet certain palpable and powerful modes there are, by observing which, we may come at such general conclusions on the subject as may be practically useful, and more than these I shall not attempt to obtain.

§ 2. With what simplicity of feeling to be approached.

And first, I would ask of the reader to enter upon the subject with me, as far as may be, as a little child, ridding himself of all conventional and authoritative thoughts, and especially of such associations as arise from his respect for Pagan art, or which are in any way traceable to classical readings. I recollect that Mr. Alison traces his first perceptions of beauty in external nature to this most corrupt source, thus betraying so total and singular a want of natural sensibility as may well excuse the deficiencies of his following arguments. For there was never yet the child of any promise (so far as the theoretic faculties are concerned) but awaked to the sense of beauty

with the first gleam of reason; and I suppose there are few, among those who love nature otherwise than by profession and at second-hand, who look not back to their youngest and least-learned days as those of the most intense, superstitious, insatiable, and beatific perception of her splendors. And the bitter decline of this glorious feeling, though many note it not, partly owing to the cares and weight of manhood, which leave them not the time nor the liberty to look for their lost treasure, and partly to the human and divine affections which are appointed to take its place, yet has formed the subject not indeed of lamentation, but of holy thankfulness for the witness it bears to the immortal origin and end of our nature, to one whose authority is almost without appeal in all questions relating to the influence of external things upon the pure human soul.

> "Heaven lies about us in our infancy,—
> Shades of the prison-house begin to close
> Upon the growing boy.
> But he beholds the light, and whence it flows
> He sees it in his joy.
> The youth, who daily farther from the east
> Must travel, still is nature's priest,
> And by the vision splendid
> Is on his way attended.
> At length the Man perceives it die away
> And fade into the light of common day."

And if it were possible for us to recollect all the unaccountable and happy instincts of the careless time, and to reason upon them with the maturer judgment, we might arrive at more rapid and right results than either the philosophy or the sophisticated practice of art have yet attained. But we lose the perceptions before we are capable of methodizing or comparing them.

§ 3. The child instinct respecting space.

One, however, of these child instincts, I believe that few forget; the emotion, namely, caused by all open ground, or lines of any spacious kind against the sky, behind which there might be conceived the sea. It is an emotion more pure than that caused by the sea itself, for I recollect distinctly running down behind the banks of a high beach to get their land line cutting against the sky, and receiving a more strange delight from this than from the sight of the ocean: I am

not sure that this feeling is common to all children, (or would be common if they were all in circumstances admitting it,) but I have ascertained it to be frequent among those who possess the most vivid sensibilities for nature; and I am certain that the modification of it, which belongs to our after years, is common to all, the love, namely, of a light distance appearing over a comparatively dark horizon. This I have tested too frequently to be mistaken, by offering to indifferent spectators forms of equal abstract beauty in half tint, relieved, the one against dark sky, the other against a bright distance. The preference is invariably given to the latter, and it is very certain that this preference arises not from any supposition of there being greater truth in this than the other, for the same preference is unhesitatingly accorded to the same effect in nature herself. Whatever beauty there may result from effects of light on foreground objects, from the dew of the grass, the flash of the cascade, the glitter of the birch trunk, or the fair daylight hues of darker things, (and joyfulness there is in all of them,) there is yet a light which the eye invariably seeks with a deeper feeling of the beautiful, the light of the declining or breaking day, and the flakes of scarlet cloud burning like watch-fires in the green sky of the horizon; a deeper feeling, I say, not perhaps more acute, but having more of spiritual hope and longing, less of animal and present life, more manifest, invariably, in those of more serious and determined mind, (I use the word serious, not as being opposed to cheerful, but to trivial and volatile;) but, I think, marked and unfailing even in those of the least thoughtful dispositions. I am willing to let it rest on the determination of every reader, whether the pleasure which he has received from these effects of calm and luminous distance be not the most singular and memorable of which he has been conscious, whether all that is dazzling in color, perfect in form, gladdening in expression, be not of evanescent and shallow appealing, when compared with the still small voice of the level twilight behind purple hills, or the scarlet arch of dawn over the dark, troublous-edged sea.

§ 4. Continued in after life.

Let us try to discover that which effects of this kind possess or suggest, peculiar to themselves, and which other effects of light and color possess not. There *must* be something in them of a peculiar character, and

§ 5. Whereto this instinct is traceable.

that, whatever it be, must be one of the primal and most earnest motives of beauty to human sensation.

Do they show finer characters of form than can be developed by the broader daylight? Not so; for their power is almost independent of the forms they assume or display; it matters little whether the bright clouds be simple or manifold, whether the mountain line be subdued or majestic, the fairer forms of earthly things are by them subdued and disguised, the round and muscular growth of the forest trunks is sunk into skeleton lines of quiet shade, the purple clefts of the hill-side are labyrinthed in the darkness, the orbed spring and whirling wave of the torrent have given place to a white, ghastly, interrupted gleaming. Have they more perfection or fulness of color? Not so; for their effect is oftentimes deeper when their hues are dim, than when they are blazoned with crimson and pale gold; and assuredly, in the blue of the rainy sky, in the many tints of morning flowers, in the sunlight on summer foliage and field, there are more sources of mere sensual color-pleasure than in the single streak of wan and dying light. It is not then by nobler form, it is not by positiveness of hue, it is not by intensity of light, (for the sun itself at noonday is effectless upon the feelings,) that this strange distant space possesses its attractive power. But there is one thing that it has, or suggests, which no other object of sight suggests in equal degree, and that is,—Infinity. It is of all visible things the least material, the least finite, the farthest withdrawn from the earth prison-house, the most typical of the nature of God, the most suggestive of the glory of his dwelling-place. For the sky of night, though we may know it boundless, is dark, it is a studded vault, a roof that seems to shut us in and down, but the bright distance has no limit, we feel its infinity, as we rejoice in its purity of light.

§ 6. Infinity how necessary in art.

Now not only is this expression of infinity in distance most precious wherever we find it, however solitary it may be, and however unassisted by other forms and kinds of beauty, but it is of that value that no such other forms will altogether recompense us for its loss; and much as I dread the enunciation of anything that may seem like a conventional rule, I have no hesitation in asserting, that no work of any art, in which this expression of infinity is possible, can be perfect, or supremely elevated without it, and that, in proportion

to its presence, it will exalt and render impressive even the most tame and trivial themes. And I think if there be any one grand division, by which it is at all possible to set the productions of painting, so far as their mere plan or system is concerned, on our right and left hands, it is this of light and dark background, of heaven light or of object light. For I know not any truly great painter of any time, who manifests not the most intense pleasure in the luminous space of his backgrounds, or who ever sacrifices this pleasure where the nature of his subject admits of its attainment, as on the other hand I know not that the habitual use of dark backgrounds can be shown as having ever been co-existent with pure or high feeling, and, except in the case of Rembrandt, (and then under peculiar circumstances only,) with any high power of intellect. It is however necessary carefully to observe the following modifications of this broad principle.

§ 7. Conditions of its necessity.

The absolute necessity, for such indeed I consider it, is of no more than such a mere luminous distant point as may give to the feelings a species of escape from all the finite objects about them. There is a spectral etching of Rembrandt, a presentation of Christ in the temple, where the figure of a robed priest stands glaring by its gems out of the gloom, holding a crosier. Behind it there is a subdued window light seen in the opening between two columns, without which the impressiveness of the whole subject would, I think, be incalculably brought down. I cannot tell whether I am at present allowing too much weight to my own fancies and predilections, but without so much escape into the outer air and open heaven as this, I can take permanent pleasure in no picture.

§ 8. And connected analogies.

And I think I am supported in this feeling by the unanimous practice, if not the confessed opinion, of all artists. The painter of portrait is unhappy without his conventional white stroke under the sleeve, or beside the arm-chair; the painter of interiors feels like a caged bird, unless he can throw a window open, or set the door ajar; the landscapist dares not lose himself in forest without a gleam of light under its farthest branches, nor ventures out in rain, unless he may somewhere pierce to a better promise in the distance, or cling to some closing gap of variable blue above;—escape, hope, infinity, by whatever conventionalism sought, the desire is the same in all

the instinct constant, it is no mere point of light that is wanted in the etching of Rembrandt above instanced, a gleam of armor or fold of temple curtain would have been utterly valueless, neither is it liberty, for though we cut down hedges and level hills, and give what waste and plain we choose, on the right hand and the left, it is all comfortless and undesired, so long as we cleave not a way of escape forward; and however narrow and thorny and difficult the nearer path, it matters not, so only that the clouds open for us at its close. Neither will any amount of beauty in nearer form, make us content to stay with it, so long as we are shut down to that alone, nor is any form so cold or so hurtful but that we may look upon it with kindness, so only that it rise against the infinite hope of light beyond. The reader can follow out the analogies of this unassisted.

§ 9. How the dignity of treatment is proportioned to the expression of infinity.

But although this narrow portal of escape be all that is absolutely necessary, I think that the dignity of the painting increases with the extent and amount of the expression. With the earlier and mightier painters of Italy, the practice is commonly to leave their distance of pure and open sky, of such simplicity, that it in nowise shall interfere with or draw the attention from the interest of the figures, and of such purity, that especially towards the horizon, it shall be in the highest degree expressive of the infinite space of heaven. I do not mean to say that they did this with any occult or metaphysical motives. They did it, I think, with the child-like, unpretending simplicity of all earnest men; they did what they loved and felt; they sought what the heart naturally seeks, and gave what it most gratefully receives; and I look to them as in all points of principle (not, observe, of knowledge or empirical attainment) as the most irrefragable authorities, precisely on account of the child-like innocence, which never deemed itself authoritative, but acted upon desire, and not upon dicta, and sought for sympathy, not for admiration.

§ 10. Examples among the Southern schools.

And so we find the same simple and sweet treatment, the open sky, the tender, unpretending, horizontal white clouds, the far winding and abundant landscape, in Giotto, Taddeo, Gaddi, Laurati, Angelico, Benozzo, Ghirlandajo, Francia, Perugino, and the young Raffaelle, the first symptom of conventionality appearing in Perugino, who, though

with intense feeling of light and color he carried the glory of his luminous distance far beyond all his predecessors, began at the same time to use a somewhat morbid relief of his figures against the upper sky. Thus in the Assumption of the Florentine Academy, in that of l'Annunziata; and of the Gallery of Bologna, in all which pictures the lower portions are incomparably the finest, owing to the light distance behind the heads. Raffaelle, in his fall, betrayed the faith he had received from his father and his master, and substituted for the radiant sky of the Madonna dei Cardellino, the chamber-wall of the Madonna della Sedìola—and the brown wainscot of the Baldacchino. Yet it is curious to observe how much of the dignity even of his later pictures, depends on such portions as the green light of the lake, and sky behind the rocks, in the St. John of the tribune, and how the repainted distortion of the Madonna dell' Impannata, is redeemed into something like elevated character, merely by the light of the linen window from which it takes its name.

§ 11. Among the Venetians.

That which by the Florentines was done in pure simplicity of heart, was done by the Venetians with intense love of the color and splendor of the sky itself, even to the frequent sacrificing of their subject to the passion of its distance. In Carpaccio, John Bellini, Giorgione, Titian, Veronese, and Tintoret, the preciousness of the luminous sky, so far as it might be at all consistent with their subject, is nearly constant; abandoned altogether in portraiture only, seldom even there, and never with advantage. Titian and Veronese, who had less exalted feeling than the others, affording a few instances of exception, the latter overpowering his silvery distances with foreground splendor, the other sometimes sacrificing them to a luscious fulness of color, as in the Flagellation in the Louvre, by a comparison of which with the unequalled majesty of the Entombment opposite, the whole power and applicability of the general principle may at once be tested.

§ 12. Among the painters of landscape.

But of the value of this mode of treatment there is a farther and more convincing proof than its adoption either by the innocence of the Florentine or the ardor of the Venetian, namely, that when retained or imitated from them by the landscape painters of the seventeenth century, when appearing in isolation from all other good, among the weaknesses

and paltrinesses of Claude, the mannerisms of Gaspar, and the caricatures and brutalities of Salvator, it yet redeems and upholds all three, conquers all foulness by its purity, vindicates all folly by its dignity, and puts an uncomprehended power of permanent address to the human heart, upon the lips of the senseless and the profane.*

§ 13. Other modes in which the power of infinity is felt.

Now, although I doubt not that the general value of this treatment will be acknowledged by all lovers of art, it is not certain that the point to prove which I have brought it forward, will be as readily conceded, namely, the inherent power of all representations of infinity over the human heart; for there are, indeed, countless associations of pure and religious kind, which combine with each other to enhance the impression, when presented in this particular form, whose power I neither deny nor am careful to distinguish, seeing that they all tend to the same Divine point, and have reference to heavenly hopes; delights they are in seeing the narrow, black, miserable earth fairly compared with the bright firmament, reachings forward unto the things that are before, and joyfulness in the apparent though unreachable nearness and promise of them. But there are other modes in which infinity may be represented, which are confused by no associations of the kind, and which would, as being in mere matter, appear trivial and mean, but for

* In one of the smaller rooms of the Pitti palace, over the door, is a temptation of St. Anthony, by Salvator, wherein such power as the artist possessed is fully manifested, with little, comparatively, that is offensive. It is a vigorous and ghastly thought, in that kind of horror which is dependent on scenic effect, perhaps unrivalled, and I shall have occasion to refer to it again in speaking of the powers of imagination. I allude to it here, because the sky of the distance affords a remarkable instance of the power of light at present under discussion. It is formed of flakes of black cloud, with rents and openings of intense and lurid green, and at least half of the impressiveness of the picture depends on these openings. Close them, make the sky one mass of gloom, and the spectre will be awful no longer. It owes to the light of the distance both its size and its spirituality. The time would fail me if I were to name the tenth part of the pictures which occur to me, whose vulgarity is redeemed by this circumstance alone, and yet let not the artist trust to such morbid and conventional use of it as may be seen in the common blue and yellow effectism of the present day. Of the value of moderation and simplicity in the use of this, as of all other sources of pleasurable emotion, I shall presently have occasion to speak farther.

their incalculable influence on the forms of all that we feel to be beautiful. The first of these is the curvature of lines and surfaces, wherein it at first appears futile to insist upon any resemblance or suggestion of infinity, since there is certainly in our ordinary contemplation of it, no sensation of the kind. But I have repeated again and again that the ideas of beauty are instinctive, and that it is only upon consideration, and even then in doubtful and disputable way, that they appear in their typical character; neither do I intend at all to insist upon the particular meaning which they appear to myself to bear, but merely on their actual and demonstrable agreeableness, so that, in the present case, while I assert positively, and have no fear of being able to prove, that a curve of any kind is more beautiful than a right line, I leave it to the reader to accept or not, as he pleases, that reason of its agreeableness, which is the only one that I can at all trace, namely, that every curve divides itself infinitely by its changes of direction.

§ 14. The beauty of curvature.

That all forms of acknowledged beauty are composed exclusively of curves will, I believe, be at once allowed; but that which there will be need more especially to prove, is the subtilty and constancy of curvature in all natural forms whatsoever. I believe that, except in crystals, in certain mountain forms admitted for the sake of sublimity or contrast, (as in the slope of debris,) in rays of light, in the levels of calm water and alluvial land, and in some few organic developments, there are no lines nor surfaces of nature without curvature, though as we before saw in clouds, more especially in their under lines towards the horizon, and in vast and extended plains, right lines are often suggested which are not actual. Without those we could not be sensible of the value of the contrasting curves, and while, therefore, for the most part, the eye is fed in natural forms with a grace of curvature which no hand nor instrument can follow, other means are provided to give beauty to those surfaces which are admitted for contrast, as in water by its reflection of the gradations which it possesses not itself. In freshly-broken ground, which nature has not yet had time to model, in quarries and pits which are none of her cutting, in those convulsions and evidences of convulsion, of whose influence on ideal landscape I shall presently have occasion to speak, and

§ 15. How constant in external nature.

generally in all ruin and disease, and interference of one order of being with another, (as in the cattle line of park trees,) the curves vanish, and violently opposed or broken and unmeaning lines take their place.

§ 16. The beauty of gradation.

What curvature is to lines, gradation is to shades and colors. It is *their* infinity, and divides them into an infinite number of degrees. Absolutely, without gradation no natural surface can possibly be, except under circumstances of so rare conjunction as to amount to a lusus naturæ; for we have seen that few surfaces are without curvature, and every curved surface must be gradated by the nature of light, which is most intense when it impinges at the highest angle, and for the gradation of the few plane surfaces that exist, means are provided in local color, aerial perspective, reflected lights, etc., from which it is but barely conceivable that they should ever escape. Hence for instances of the complete absence of gradation we must look to man's work, or to his disease and decrepitude. Compare the gradated colors of the rainbow with the stripes of a target, and the gradual concentration of the youthful blood in the cheek with an abrupt patch of rouge, or with the sharply drawn veining of old age.

§ 17. How found in Nature.

Gradation is so inseparable a quality of all natural shade and color that the eye refuses in art to understand anything as either, which appears without it, while on the other hand nearly all the gradations of nature are so subtile and between degrees of tint so slightly separated, that no human hand can in any wise equal, or do anything more than suggest the idea of them. In proportion to the space over which gradation extends, sand to its invisible subtilty, is its grandeur, and in proportion to its narrow limits and violent degrees, its vulgarity. In Correggio, it is morbid and vulgar in spite of its refinement of execution, because the eye is drawn to it, and it is made the most observable and characteristic part of the picture; whereas natural gradation is forever escaping observation to that degree that the greater part of artists in working from nature see it not, (except in certain of its marked developments,) but either lay down such continuous lines and colors, as are both disagreeable and impossible, or, receiving the necessity of gradation as a principle instead of a fact, use it in violently exaggerated measure.

and so lose both the dignity of their own work, and by the constant dwelling of their eyes upon exaggerations, their sensibility to that of the natural forms. So that we find the majority of painters divided between the two evil extremes of insufficiency and affectation, and only a few of the greatest men capable of making gradation constant and yet extended over enormous spaces and within degrees of narrow difference, as in the body of a high light.

§ 18. How necessary in Art

From the necessity of gradation results what is commonly given as a rule of art, though its authority as a rule obtains only from its being a fact of nature, that the extremes of high light and pure color, can exist only in points. The common rules respecting sixths and eighths, held concerning light and shade, are entirely absurd and conventional; according to the subject and the effect of light, the greater part of the picture will be or ought to be light or dark; but that principle which is not conventional, is that of all light however high, there is some part that is higher than the rest, and that of all color, however pure, there is some part that is purer than the rest, and that generally of all shade, however deep, there is some part deeper than the rest, though this last fact is frequently sacrificed in art, owing to the narrowness of its means. But on the right gradation or focussing of light and color depends in great measure, the value of both. Of this, I have spoken sufficiently in pointing out the singular constancy of it in the works of Turner. Part II. Sect. II. Chap. II. § 17. And it is generally to be observed that even raw and valueless color, if rightly and subtilely gradated will in some measure stand for light, and that the most transparent and perfect hue will be in some measure unsatisfactory, if entirely unvaried. I believe the early skies of Raffaelle owe their luminousness more to their untraceable and subtile gradation than to inherent quality of hue.

§ 19. Infinity not rightly implied by vastness.

Such are the expressions of infinity which we find in creation, of which the importance is to be estimated, rather by their frequency than their distinctness. Let, however, the reader bear constantly in mind that I insist not on his accepting any interpretation of mine, but only on his dwelling so long on those objects, which he perceives to be beautiful, as to determine whether the qualities to which I trace

their beauty, be necessarily there or no. Farther expressions of infinity there are in the mystery of nature, and in some measure in her vastness, but these are dependent on our own imperfections, and therefore, though they produce sublimity, they are unconnected with beauty. For that which we foolishly call vastness is, rightly considered, not more wonderful, not more impressive, than that which we insolently call littleness, and the infinity of God is not mysterious, it is only unfathomable, not concealed, but incomprehensible: it is a clear infinity, the darkness of the pure unsearchable sea.

CHAPTER VI.

OF UNITY, OR THE TYPE OF THE DIVINE COMPREHENSIVENESS.

§ 1. The general conception of divine Unity.

"ALL things," says Hooker, "(God only excepted,) besides the nature which they have in themselves, receive externally some perfection from other things." Hence the appearance of separation or isolation in anything, and of self-dependence, is an appearance of imperfection: all all appearances of connection and brotherhood are pleasant and right, both as significative of perfection in the things united, and as typical of that Unity which we attribute to God, and of which our true conception is rightly explained and limited by Dr. Brown in his XCII. lecture; that Unity which consists not in his own singleness or separation, but in the necessity of his inherence in all things that be, without which no creature of any kind could hold existence for a moment. Which necessity of Divine essence I think it better to speak of as comprehensiveness, than as unity, because unity is often understood in the sense of oneness or singleness, instead of universality, whereas the only Unity which by any means can become grateful or an object of hope to men, and whose types therefore in material things can be beautiful, is that on which turned the last words and prayer of Christ before his crossing of the Kidron brook. "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word. That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee."

§ 2. The glory of all things is their Unity.

And so there is not any matter, nor any spirit, nor any creature, but it is capable of an unity of some kind with other creatures, and in that unity is its perfection and theirs, and a pleasure also for the beholding of all other creatures that can behold. So the unity of spirits is partly in their sympathy, and partly in their giving and taking, and always in their love; and these are their delight and their strength,

for their strength is in their co-working and army fellowship, and their delight is in the giving and receiving of alternate and perpetual currents of good, their inseparable dependency on each other's being, and their essential and perfect depending on their Creator's: and so the unity of earthly creatures is their power and their peace, not like the dead and cold peace of undisturbed stones and solitary mountains, but the living peace of trust, and the living power of support, of hands that hold each other and are still: and so the unity of matter is, in its noblest form, the organization of it which builds it up into temples for the spirit, and in its lower form, the sweet and strange affinity, which gives to it the glory of its orderly elements, and the fair variety of change and assimilation that turns the dust into the crystal, and separates the waters that be above the firmament from the waters that be beneath, and in its lowest form; it is the working and walking and clinging together that gives their power to the winds, and its syllables and soundings to the air, and their weight to the waves, and their burning to the sunbeams, and their stability to the mountains, and to every creature whatsoever operation is for its glory and for others good.

Now of that which is thus necessary to the perfection of all things, all appearance, sign, type, or suggestion must be beautiful, in whatever matter it may appear. And so to the perfection of beauty in lines, or colors, or forms, or masses, or multitudes, the appearance of some species of unity is in the most determined sense of the word essential.

§ 3. The several kinds of unity. Subjectional. Original. Of sequence, and of membership.

But of the appearances of unity, as of unity itself, there are several kinds which it will be found hereafter convenient to consider separately. Thus there is the unity of different and separate things, subjected to one and the same influence, which may be called subjectional unity, and this is the unity of the clouds, as they are driven by the parallel winds, or as they are ordered by the electric currents, and this the unity of the sea waves, and this of the bending and undulation of the forest masses, and in creatures capable of will it is the unity of will or of inspiration. And there is unity of origin, which we may call original unity, which is of things arising from one spring and source, and speaking always of this their brotherhood, and this in matter is the unity of the

branches of the trees, and of the petals and starry rays of flowers, and of the beams of light, and in spiritual creatures it is their filial relation to Him from whom they have their being. And there is unity of sequence, which is that of things that form links in chains, and steps in ascent, and stages in journeys, and this, in matter, is the unity of communicable forces in their continuance from one thing to another, and it is the passing upwards and downwards of beneficent effects among all things, and it is the melody of sounds, and the beauty of continuous lines, and the orderly succession of motions and times. And in spiritual creatures it is their own constant building up by true knowledge and continuous reasoning to higher perfection, and the singleness and straight-forwardness of their tendencies to more complete communion with God. And there is the unity of membership, which we may call essential unity, which is the unity of things separately imperfect into a perfect whole, and this is the great unity of which other unities are but parts and means, it is in matter the harmony of sounds and consistency of bodies, and among spiritual creatures, their love and happiness and very life in God.

§ 4. Unity of membership. How secured.

Now of the nature of this last kind of unity, the most important whether in moral or in those material things with which we are at present concerned, there is this necessary to be observed, that it cannot exist between things similar to each other. Two or more equal and like things cannot be members one of another, nor can they form one, or a whole thing. Two they must remain, both in nature and in our conception, so long as they remain alike, unless they are united by a third different from both. Thus the arms, which are like each other, remain two arms in our conception. They could not be united by a third arm, they must be united by something which is not an arm, and which, imperfect without them as they without it, shall form one perfect body; nor is unity even thus accomplished, without a difference and opposition of direction in the setting on of the like members. Therefore among all things which are to have unity of membership one with another, there must be difference or variety; and though it is possible that many like things may be made members of one body, yet it is remarkable that this structure appears characteristic of the lower creatures, rather than the higher, as the many legs of the caterpillar, and

the many arms and suckers of the radiata, and that, as we rise in order of being, the number of similar members becomes less, and their structure commonly seems based on the principle of the unity of two things by a third, as Plato has it in the Timæus, § II.

§ 5. Variety. Why required

Hence, out of the necessity of unity, arises that of variety, a necessity often more vividly, though never so deeply felt, because lying at the surfaces of things, and assisted by an influential principle of our nature, the love of change, and the power of contrast. But it is a mistake which has led to many unfortunate results, in matters respecting art, to insist on any inherent agreeableness of variety, without reference to a farther end. For it is not even true that variety as such, and in its highest degree, is beautiful. A patched garment of many colors is by no means so agreeable as one of a single and continuous hue; the splendid colors of many birds are eminently painful from their violent separation and inordinate variety, while the pure and colorless swan is, under certain circumstances, the most beautiful of all feathered creatures.* A forest of all manner of trees is poor, if not disagreeable in effect,† a mass of one species of tree is sublime. It is therefore only harmonious and chordal variety, that variety which is necessary to secure and extend unity, (for the greater the number of objects, which by their differences become members of one another, the more extended and sublime is their unity,) which is rightly agreeable, and so I name not variety as essential to beauty, because it is only so in a secondary and casual sense.‡

* Compare Chap. ix. § 5. note.

† Spenser's various forest is the Forest of Error.

‡ It must be matter of no small wonderment to practical men to observe now grossly the nature and connection of unity and variety have been misunderstood and misstated, by those writers upon taste, who have been guided by no experience of art: most singularly perhaps by Mr. Alison, who, confounding unity with uniformity, and leading his readers through thirty pages of discussion respecting uniformity and variety, the intelligibility of which is not by any means increased by his supposing uniformity to be capable of existence in single things; at last substitutes for these two terms, sufficiently contradictory already, those of similarity and dissimilarity, the reconciliation of which opposites in one thing we must, I believe, leave Mr. Alison to accomplish.

§ 6 Change and its influence on beauty.

Of the love of change as a principle of human nature, and the pleasantness of variety resulting from it, something has already been said, (Ch. IV. § 4,) only as there I was opposing the idea that our being familiar with objects was the cause of our delight in them, so here, I have to oppose the contrary position, that their strangeness is the cause of it. For neither familiarity nor strangeness have more operation on, or connection with, impressions of one sense than of another, and they have less power over the impressions of sense generally, than over the intellect in its joyful accepting of fresh knowledge, and dull contemplation of that it has long possessed. Only in their operation on the senses they act contrarily at different times, as for instance the newness of a dress or of some kind of unaccustomed food may make it for a time delightful, but as the novelty passes away, so also may the delight, yielding to disgust or indifference, which in their turn, as custom begins to operate, may pass into affection and craving, and that which was first a luxury, and then a matter of indifference, becomes a necessity:* whereas in subjects of the intellect, the chief delight they convey is dependent upon their being newly and vividly comprehended, and as they become subjects of contemplation they lose their value, and become tasteless and unregarded, except as instruments for the reaching of others, only that though they sink down into the shadowy, effectless, heap of things indifferent, which we pack, and crush down, and stand upon, to reach things new, they sparkle afresh at intervals as we stir them by throwing a new stone into the heap, and letting the newly admitted lights play upon them. And both in subjects of the intellect and the senses it is to be remembered, that the love of change is a weakness and imperfection of our nature, and implies in it the state of probation, and that it is to teach us that things about us here are not meant for our continual possession or satisfaction, that ever such passion of change was put in us as that "custom lies upon us with a weight, heavy as frost, and deep almost as life," and only such weak back and baby grasp given to our intellect as that "the best things we do are painful, and the exercise of them grievous, being continued without intermission, so as in those very actions whereby we are

* Καὶ τὸ ταὐτὰ πράττειν πολλάκις ἡδύ·—τὸ γὰρ σύνηθες ἡδὺ ἦν· καὶ τὸ μεταβάλλειν ἡδύ· ἐις φύσιν γὰρ γίγνεται μεταβάλλειν.—Arist. Rhet. I. II. 20.

especially perfected in this life we are not able to persist." And so it will be found that they are the weakest-minded and the hardest-hearted men that most love variety and change, for the weakest-minded are those who both wonder most at things new, and digest worst things old, in so far that everything they have lies rusty, and loses lustre for want of use; neither do they make any stir among their possessions, nor look over them to see what may be made of them, nor keep any great store, nor are householders with storehouses of things new and old, but they catch at the new-fashioned garments, and let the moth and thief look after the rest; and the hardest-hearted men are those that least feel the endearing and binding power of custom, and hold on by no cords of affection to any shore, but drive with the waves that cast up mire and dirt. And certainly it is not to be held that the perception of beauty and desire of it, are greatest in the hardest heart and weakest brain; but the love of variety is so, and therefore variety can be no cause of the beautiful, except, as I have said, when it is necessary for the perception of unity, neither is there any better test of that which is indeed beautiful than its surviving or annihilating the love of change; and this is a test which the best judges of art have need frequently to use; and the wisest of them will use it always, for there is much in art that surprises by its brilliancy, or attracts by its singularity, that can hardly but by course of time, though assuredly it will by course of time, be winnowed away from the right and real beauty whose retentive power is forever on the increase, a bread of the soul for which the hunger is continual.

§ 7. The love of change How morbid and evil.

Receiving, therefore, variety only as that which accomplishes unity, or makes it perceived, its operation is found to be very precious, both in that which I have called unity of subjection, and unity of sequence, as well as in unity of membership; for although things in all respects the same may, indeed, be subjected to one influence, yet the power of the influence, and their obedience to it, is best seen by varied operation of it on their individual differences, as in clouds and waves there is a glorious unity of rolling, wrought out by the wild and wonderful differences of their absolute forms, which, if taken away, would leave in them only multitudinous and petty repetition, instead of the majestic oneness of

§ 8. The conducing of variety towards unity of subjection.

shared passion. And so in the waves and clouds of human multitude when they are filled with one thought, as we find frequently in the works of the early Italian men of earnest purpose, who despising, or happily ignorant of, the sophistications of theories, and the proprieties of composition, indicated by perfect similarity of action and gesture on the one hand, and by the infinite and truthful variation of expression on the other, the most sublime strength, because the most absorbing unity, of multitudinous passion that ever human heart conceived. Hence, in the cloister of St. Mark's, the intense, fixed, statue-like silence of ineffable adoration upon the spirits in prison at the feet of Christ, side by side, the hands lifted, and the knees bowed, and the lips trembling together;* and in St. Domenico of Fiesole,† that whirlwind rush of the Angels and the redeemed souls round about him at his resurrection, so that we hear the blast of the horizontal trumpets mixed with the dying clangor of their ingathered wings. The same great feeling occurs throughout the works of the serious men, though most intensely in Angelico, and it is well to compare with it the vileness and falseness of all that succeeded, when men had begun to bring to the cross foot their systems instead of their sorrow. Take as the most marked and degraded instance, perhaps, to be anywhere found, Bronzino's treatment of the same subject (Christ visiting the spirits in prison,) in the picture now in the Tuscan room of the Uffizii, which, vile as it is in color, vacant in invention, void in light and shade, a heap of cumbrous nothingnesses, and sickening offensivenesses, is of all its voids most void in this, that the academy models therein huddled together at the bottom, show not so much unity or community of attention to the academy model with the flag in its hand above, as a street crowd would be to a fresh-staged charlatan. Some *point* to the God

* Fra Angelico's fresco, in a cell of the upper cloister. He treated the subject frequently. Another characteristic example occurs in the Vita di Christo of the Academy, a series now unfortunately destroyed by the picture cleaners. Simon Memmi in Santa Maria Novella (Chapelle des Espagnols) has given another very beautiful instance. In Giotto the principle is universal, though his multitudes are somewhat more dramatically and powerfully varied in gesture than Angelico's. In Mino da Fiesole's altar-piece in the church of St. Ambrogiot at Florence, close by Cosimo Rosselli's fresco, there is a beautiful example in marble.

† The Predella of the picture behind the altar.

who has burst the gates of death, as if the rest were incapable of distinguishing him for themselves, and others turn their backs upon him, to show their unagitated faces to the spectator.

§ 9. And towards unity of sequence.

In unity of sequence, the effect of variety is best exemplified by the melodies of music, wherein by the differences of the notes, they are connected with each other in certain pleasant relations. This connection taking place in quantities is proportion, respecting which certain general principles must be noted, as the subject is one open to many errors, and obscurely treated of by writers on art.

§ 10. The nature of proportion. 1st. of apparent proportion.

Proportion is of two distinct kinds. Apparent: when it takes place between qualities for the sake of connection only, without any ultimate object or casual necessity; and constructive: when it has reference to some function to be discharged by the quantities, depending on their proportion. From the confusion of these two kinds of proportion have arisen the greater part of the erroneous conceptions of the influence of either.

Apparent proportion, or the sensible relation of quantities, is one of the most important means of obtaining unity between things which otherwise must have remained distinct in similarity, and as it may consist with every other kind of unity, and persist when every other means of it fails, it may be considered as lying at the root of most of our impressions of the beautiful. There is no sense of rightness, or wrongness connected with it, no sense of utility, propriety, or expediency. These ideas enter only where the proportion of quantities has reference to some function to be performed by them. It cannot be asserted that it is right or that it is wrong that A should be to B, as B to C; unless A, B, and C have some desirable operation dependent on that relation. But nevertheless it may be highly agreeable to the eye that A, B, and C, if visible things, should have visible connection of ratio, even though nothing be accomplished by such connection. On the other hand, constructive proportion, or the adaptation of quantities to functions, is agreeable not to the eye, but to the mind, which is cognizant of the function to be performed. Thus the pleasantness or rightness of the proportions of a column depends not on the mere relation of diameter and height, (which is not proportion at all, for proportion is between three terms at least,)

but on three other involved terms, the strength of materials, the weight to be borne, and the scale of the building. The proportions of a wooden column are wrong in a stone one, and of a small building wrong in a large one,* and this owing solely to mechan-

* It seems never to have been rightly understood, even by the more intelligent among our architects, that proportion is in any way connected with positive size; it seems to be held among them that a small building may be expanded to a large one merely by proportionally expanding all its parts: and that the harmony will be equally agreeable on whatever scale it be rendered. Now this is true of apparent proportion, but utterly false of constructive; and, as much of the value of architectural proportion is constructive, the error is often productive of the most painful results. It may be best illustrated by observing the conditions of proportion in animals. Many persons have thoughtlessly claimed admiration for the strength—supposed gigantic—of insects and smaller animals; because capable of lifting weights, leaping distances, and surmounting obstacles, of proportion apparently overwhelming. Thus the Formica Herculanea will lift in its mouth, and brandish like a baton, sticks thicker than itself and six times its length, all the while scrambling over crags of about the proportionate height of the Cliffs of Dover, three or four in a minute. There is nothing extraordinary in this, nor any exertion of strength necessarily greater than human, in proportion to the size of the body. For it is evident that if the size and strength of any creature be expanded or diminished in proportion to each other, the distance through which it can leap, the time it can maintain exertion, or any other third term resultant, remains constant; that is, diminish weight of powder and of ball proportionately, and the distance carried is constant, or nearly so. Thus, a grasshopper, a man, and a giant 100 feet high, supposing their muscular strength equally proportioned to their size, can or could all leap, not proportionate distance, but the same or nearly the same distance—say, four feet the grasshopper, or forty-eight times his length; six feet the man or his length exactly; ten feet the giant or the tenth of his length. Hence all small animals can, *cæteris paribus*, perform feats of strength and agility, exactly so much greater than those to be executed by large ones, as the animals themselves are smaller; and to enable an elephant to leap like a grasshopper, he must be endowed with strength a million times greater in *proportion* to his size. Now the consequence of this general mechanical law is, that as we increase the scale of animals, their means of power, whether muscles of motion or bones of support, must be increased in a more than proportionate degree, or they become utterly unwieldy, and incapable of motion;—and there is a limit to this increase of strength. If the elephant had legs as long as a spider's, no combination of animal matter that could be hide-bound would have strength enough to move them: to support the megatherium, we must have a humerus a foot in diameter, though perhaps not more than two feet long, and that in a vertical position under him, while the gnat can hang on the window frame, and poise himself to sting, in the middle of crooked stilts like threads; stretched out to ten times the breadth of his body on each side Increase the size of the megatherium a little more,

ical considerations, which have no more to do with ideas of beauty, than the relation between the arms of a lever, adapted to the raising of a given weight; and yet it is highly agreeable to perceive that such constructive proportion has been duly observed, as it is agreeable to see that anything is fit for its purpose or for ours, and also that it has been the result of intelligence in the workman of it, so that we sometimes feel a pleasure in apparent non-adaptation, if it be a sign of ingenuity; as in the unnatural and seemingly impossible lightness of Gothic spires and roofs.

Now, the errors against which I would caution the reader in this matter are three. The first, is the overlooking or denial of the power of apparent proportion, of which power neither Burke nor any other writer whose works I have met with, take cognizance. The second, is the attribution of *beauty* to the appearances of constructive proportion. The third, the denial with Burke of *any* value or agreeableness in constructive proportion.

and no phosphate of lime will bear him: he would crush his own legs to powder. (Compare Sir Charles Bell, "Bridgewater Treatise on the Hand," p. 296, and the note.) Hence there is not only a limit to the size of animals, in the conditions of matter, but to their activity also, the largest being always least capable of exertion; and this would be the case to a far greater extent, but that nature beneficently alters her proportions as she increases her scale; giving, as we have seen, long legs and enormous wings to the smaller tribes, and short and thick proportion to the larger. So in vegetables—compare the stalk of an ear of oat, and the trunk of a pine, the mechanical relations being in both the same. So also in waves, of which the large never can be mere exaggerations of the small, but have different slopes and curvatures: so in mountains and all things else, necessarily, and from ordinary mechanical laws. Whence in architecture, according to the scale of the building, its proportions must be altered; and I have no hesitation in calling that unmeaning exaggeration of parts in St. Peter's, of flutings, volutes, friezes, etc., in the proportions of a smaller building, a vulgar blunder, and one that destroys all the majesty that the building ought to have had—and still more I should so cal all imitations and adaptations of large buildings on a small scale. The true test of right proportion is that it shall itself inform us of the scale of the building, and be such that even in a drawing it shall instantly induce the conception of the actual size, or size intended. I know not what Fuseli means by that aphorism of his:—

"Disproportion of parts is the element of hugeness—proportion, of grandeur. All Gothic styles of Architecture are huge. The Greek alone is grand." When a building *is* vast, it ought to look so; and the proportion is right which exhibits its vastness. Nature loses no size by her proportion; her buttressed mountains have more of Gothic than of Greek in them.

§ 11. The value of apparent proportion in curvature.

Now, the full proof of the influence of apparent proportion, I must reserve for illustration by diagram; one or two instances however may be given at present for the better understanding of its nature.

We have already asserted that all curves are more beautiful than right lines. All curves, however, are not equally beautiful, and their differences of beauty depend on the different proportions borne to each other by those infinitely small right lines of which they may be conceived as composed.

When these lines are equal and contain equal angles, there can be no connection or unity of sequence in them. The resulting curve, the circle, is therefore the least beautiful of all curves.

When the lines bear to each other some certain proportion; or when, the lines remaining equal, the angles vary; or when by any means whatsoever, and in whatever complicated modes, such differences as shall imply connection are established between the infinitely small segments, the resulting curves become beautiful. The simplest of the beautiful curves are the conic, and the various spirals; but it is as rash as it is difficult to endeavor to trace any ground of superiority or inferiority among the infinite numbers of the higher curves. I believe that almost all are beautiful in their own nature, and that their comparative beauty depends on the constant quantities involved in their equations. Of this point I shall speak hereafter at greater length.

§ 12. How by nature obtained.

The universal forces of nature, and the individual energies of the matter submitted to them, are so appointed and balanced, that they are continually bringing out curves of this kind in all visible forms, and that circular lines become nearly impossible under any circumstances. The gradual acceleration, for instance, of velocity, in streams that descend from hill-sides, as it gradually increases their power of erosion increases in the same gradual degree the rate of curvature in the descent of the slope, until at a certain degree of steepness this descent meets, and is concealed by the right line of the detritus. The junction of this right line with the plain is again modified by the farther bounding of the larger blocks, and by the successively diminishing proportion of landslips caused by erosion at the bottom, so that the whole line of the hill is one of curvature, first, gradually increasing in rapidity to the maximum steepness of

which the particular rock is capable, and then decreasing in a decreasing ratio, until it arrives at the plain level. This type of form, modified of course more or less by the original boldness of the mountain, and dependent both on its age, its constituent rock, and the circumstances of its exposure, is yet in its general formula applicable to all. So the curves of all things in motion, and of all organic forms, most rudely and simply in the shell spirals, and in their most complicated development in the muscular lines of the higher animals.

This influence of apparent proportion, a proportion, be it observed, which has no reference to ultimate ends, but which is itself, seemingly, the end and object of operation in many of the forces of nature, is therefore at the root of all our delight in any beautiful form whatsoever. For no form can be beautiful which is not composed of curves whose unity is secured by relations of this kind.

§ 13. Apparent proportion in melodies of line.

Not only however in curvature, but in all associations of lines whatsoever, it is desirable that there should be reciprocal relation, and the eye is unhappy without perception of it. It is utterly vain to endeavor to reduce this proportion to finite rules, for it is as various as musical melody, and the laws to which it is subject are of the same general kind, so that the determination of right or wrong proportion is as much a matter of feeling and experience as the appreciation of good musical composition; not but that there is a science of both, ann principles which may not be infringed, but that within these limits the liberty of invention is infinite, and the degrees of excellence infinite also, whence the curious error of Burke in imagining that because he could not fix upon some one given proportion of lines as better than any other, therefore proportion had no value nor influence at all, which is the same as to conclude that there is no such thing as melody in music, because there are melodies more than one.

§ 14. Error of Burke in this matter.

The argument of Burke on this subject is summed up in the following words:—"Examine the head of a beautiful horse, find what proportion that bears to his body and to his limbs, and what relations these have to each other, and when you have settled these proportions, as a standard of beauty, then take a dog or cat, or any other animal, and examine

how far the same proportions between their heads and their necks, between those and the body, and so on, are found to hold; I think we may safely say, that they differ in every species, yet that there are individuals found in a great many species, so differing, that have a very striking beauty. Now if it be allowed that very different, and even contrary forms and dispositions, are consistent with beauty, it amounts, I believe, to a concession, that no certai measures operating from a natural principle are necessary to produce it, at least so far as the brute species is concerned."

In this argument there are three very palpable fallacies: the first is the rough application of measurement to the heads, necks, and limbs, without observing the subtile differences of proportion and position of parts in the members themselves, for it would be strange if the different adjustment of the ears and brow in the dog and horse, did not require a harmonizing difference of adjustment in the head and neck. The second fallacy is that above specified, the supposition that proportion cannot be beautiful if susceptible of variation, whereas the whole meaning of the term has reference to the adjustment and functional correspondence of infinitely variable quantities. And the third error is the oversight of the very important fact, that, although "different and even contrary forms and dispositions are consistent with beauty," they are by no means consistent with equal *degrees* of beauty, so that, while we find in all the presence of such proportion and harmony of form, as gifts them with positive agreeableness consistent with the station and dignity of each, we perceive, also, such superiority of proportion in some (as the horse, eagle, lion, and man for instance) as may best be in harmony with the nobler functions and more exalted powers of the animals.

§ 15. Constructive proportion. Its influence in plants.

And this allowed superiority of some animal forms to others is, in itself argument against the second error above named, that of attributing the sensation of beauty to the perception of expedient or constructive proportion. For everything that God has made is equally well constructed with reference to its intended functions. But all things are not equally beautiful. The methagerium is absolutely as well proportioned, with the view of adaptation of parts to purposes, as the horse or the swan; but by no means so handsome as either. The fact is, that the perception of expediency of proportion can

but rarely affect our estimates of beauty, for it implies a knowledge which we very rarely and imperfectly possess, and the want of which we tacitly acknowledge.

Let us consider that instance of the proportion of the stalk of a plant to its head, given by Burke. In order to judge of the expediency of this proportion, we must know, First, the scale of the plant (for the smaller the scale, the longer the stem may safely be.) Secondly, the toughness of the materials of the stem and the mode of their mechanical structure. Thirdly, the specific gravity of the head. Fourthly, the position of the head which the nature of fructification requires. Fifthly, the accidents and influences to which the situation for which the plant was created is exposed. Until we know all this, we cannot say that proportion or disproportion exists, and because we cannot know all this, the idea of expedient proportion enters but slightly into our impression of vegetable beauty, but rather, since the existence of the plant proves that these proportions have been observed, and we know that nothing but our own ignorance prevents us from perceiving them, we take the proportion on credit, and are delighted by the variety of results which the Divine intelligence has attained in the various involutions of these quantities, and perhaps most when, to outward appearance, such proportions have been violated; more by the slenderness of the campanula than the security of the pine.

§ 16. And animals. What is obscure in plants, is utterly incomprehensible in animals, owing to the greater number of means employed and functions performed. To judge of expedient proportion in them, we must know all that each member has to do, all its bones, all its muscles, and the amount of nervous energy communicable to them; and yet, forasmuch as we have more experience and instinctive sense of the strength of muscles than of wood, and more practical knowledge of the use of a head or a foot than of a flower or a stem, we are much more likely to presume upon our judgment respecting proportions here, we are very apt to assert that the plesiosaurus and cameleopard have necks too long, that the turnspit has legs too short, and the elephant a body too ponderous.

But the painfulness arising from the idea of this being the case is occasioned partly by our sympathy with the animal, partly by

our false apprehension of incompletion in the Divine work,* nor in either case has it any connection with impressions of that typical beauty of which we are at present speaking; though some, perhaps, with that vital beauty which will hereafter come under discussion.

§ 17. Summary.

I wish therefore the reader to hold, respecting proportion generally, First, That apparent proportion, or the melodious connection of quantities, is a cause of unity, and therefore one of the sources of all beautiful form. Secondly, That constructive proportion is agreeable to the mind when it is known or supposed, and that its seeming absence is painful in a like degree, but that this pleasure and pain have nothing in common with those dependent on ideas of beauty.

Farther illustrations of the value of unity I shall reserve for our detailed examination, as the bringing them forward here would interfere with the general idea of the subject-matter of the theoretic faculty which I wish succinctly to convey.

* For the just and severe reproof of which, compare Sir Charles Bell, (on the hand,) pp. 31, 32.

CHAPTER VII.

OF REPOSE, OR THE TYPE OF DIVINE PERMANENCE.

§ 1. Universal feeling respecting the necessity of repose in art. Its sources.

THERE is probably no necessity more imperatively felt by the artist, no test more unfailing of the greatness of artistical treatment, than that of the appearance of repose, and yet there is no quality whose semblance in mere matter is more difficult to define or illustrate. Nevertheless, I believe that our instinctive love of it, as well as the cause to which I attribute that love, (although here also, as in the former cases, I contend not for the interpretation, but for the fact,) will be readily allowed by the reader. As opposed to passion, changefulness, or laborious exertion, repose is the especial and separating characteristic of the eternal mind and power; it is the "I am" of the Creator opposed to the "I become" of all creatures; it is the sign alike of the supreme knowledge which is incapable of surprise, the supreme power which is incapable of labor, the supreme volition which is incapable of change; it is the stillness of the beams of the eternal chambers laid upon the variable waters of ministering creatures; and as we saw before that the infinity which was a type of the Divine nature on the one hand, became yet more desirable on the other from its peculiar address to our prison hopes, and to the expectations of an unsatisfied and unaccomplished existence, so the types of this third attribute of the Deity might seem to have been rendered farther attractive to mortal instinct, through the infliction upon the fallen creature of a curse necessitating a labor once unnatural and still most painful, so that the desire of rest planted in the heart is no sensual nor unworthy one, but a longing for renovation and for escape from a state whose every phase is mere preparation for another equally transitory, to one in which permanence shall have become possible through perfection. Hence the great call of Christ to men, that call on which St. Augustine fixed essential expression of Christian

hope, is accompanied by the promise of rest;* and the death bequest of Christ to men is peace.

§ 2. Repose how expressed in matter.

Repose, as it is expressed in material things, is either a simple appearance of permanence and quietness, as in the massy forms of a mountain or rock, accompanied by the lulling effect of all mighty sight and sound, which all feel and none define, (it would be less sacred if more explicable,) ἔνδουσιν δ' ὀρέων κορυφαί τε καὶ φάραγγες, or else it is repose proper, the rest of things in which there is vitality or capability of motion actual or imagined; and with respect to these the expression of repose is greater in proportion to the amount and sublimity of the action which is not taking place, as well as to the intensity of the negation of it. Thus we speak not of repose in a stone, because the motion of a stone has nothing in it of energy nor vitality, neither its repose of stability. But having once seen a great rock come down a mountain side, we have a noble sensation of its rest, now bedded immovably among the under fern, because the power and fearfulness of its motion were great, and its stability and negation of motion are now great in proportion. Hence the imagination, which delights in nothing more than the enhancing of the characters of repose, effects this usually by either attributing to things visibly energetic an ideal stability, or to things visibly stable an ideal activity or vitality. Hence Wordsworth, of the cloud, which in itself having too much of changefulness for his purpose, is spoken of as one "that heareth not the loud winds when they call, and moveth altogether, if it move at all." And again of children, which, that it may remove from them the child restlessness, the imagination conceives as rooted flowers "Beneath an old gray oak, as violets, lie." On the other hand, the scattered rocks, which have not, as such, vitality enough for rest, are gifted with it by the living image: they "lie couched around us like a flock of sheep."

§ 3. The necessity to repose of an implied energy.

Thus, as we saw that unity demanded for its expression what at first might have seemed its contrary (variety) so repose demands for its expression the implied capability of its opposite, energy, and this even in its lower manifestations, in rocks and stones and trees. By comparing the modes in which the mind is disposed to regard the boughs of a

* Matt. xi. 28.

fair and vigorous tree, motionless in the summer air, with the effect produced by one of these same boughs hewn square and used for threshold or lintel, the reader will at once perceive the connection of vitality with repose, and the part they both bear in beauty.

§ 4. Mental repose, how noble.

But that which in lifeless things ennobles them by seeming to indicate life, ennobles higher creatures by indicating the exaltation of their earthly vitality into a Divine vitality; and raising the life of sense into the life of faith—faith, whether we receive it in the sense of adherence to resolution, obedience to law, regardfulness of promise, in which from all time it has been the test as the shield of the true being and life of man, or in the still higher sense of trustfulness in the presence, kindness, and word of God; in which form it has been exhibited under the Christian dispensation. For whether in one or other form, whether the faithfulness of men whose path is chosen and portion fixed, in the following and receiving of that path and portion, as in the Thermopylæ camp; or the happier faithfulness of children in the good giving of their Father, and of subjects in the conduct of their king, as in the "Stand still and see the salvation of God" of the Red Sea shore, there is rest and peacefulness, the "standing still" in both, the quietness of action determined, of spirit unalarmed, of expectation unimpatient: beautiful, even when based only as of old, on the self-command and self-possession, the persistent dignity or the uncalculating love of the creature,* but more beautiful yet when the rest is one of humility instead of pride, and the trust no more in the resolution we have taken, but in the hand we hold.

* "The universal instinct of repose,
The longing for confirmed tranquillity
Inward and outward, humble, yet sublime.
The life where hope and memory are as one.
Earth quiet and unchanged; the human soul
Consistent in self rule; and heaven revealed
To meditation, in that quietness."

WORDSWORTH. Excursion, Book iii

But compare carefully (for this is put into the mouth of one diseased in thought and erring in seeking) the opening of the ninth book; and observe the difference between the mildew of inaction,—the slumber of Death; and the Patience of the Saints—the Rest of the Sabbath Eternal. (Rev. xiv. 13.)

Compare also, Chap. I. § 6.

§ 5. Its universal value as a test of art.

Hence I think that there is no desire more intense or more exalted than that which exists in all rightly disciplined minds for the evidences of repose in external signs; and what I cautiously said respecting infinity, I say fearlessly respecting repose, that no work of art can be great without it, and that all art is great in proportion to the appearance of it. It is the most unfailing test of beauty, whether of matter or of motion, nothing can be ignoble that possesses it, nothing right that has it not, and in strict proportion to its appearance in the work is the majesty of mind to be inferred in the artificer. Without regard to other qualities, we may look to this for our evidence, and by the search for this alone we may be led to the rejection of all that is base, and the accepting of all that is good and great, for the paths of wisdom are all peace. We shall see by this light three colossal images standing up side by side, looming in their great rest of spirituality above the whole world horizon, Phidias, Michael Angelo, and Dante; and then, separated from their great religious thrones only by less fulness and earnestness of Faith, Homer, and Shakspeare; and from these we may go down step by step among the mighty men of every age, securely and certainly observant of diminished lustre in every appearance of restlessness and effort, until the last trace of true inspiration vanishes in the tottering affectations or the tortured insanities of modern times. There is no art, no pursuit, whatsoever, but its results may be classed by this test alone; everything of evil is betrayed and winnowed away by it, glitter and confusion and glare of color, inconsistency or absence of thought, forced expression, evil choice of subject, over-accumulation of materials, whether in painting or literature, the shallow and unreflecting nothingness of the English schools of art, the strained and disgusting horrors of the French, the distorted feverishness of the German:—pretence, over decoration, over division of parts in architecture, and again in music, in acting, in dancing, in whatsoever art, great or mean, there are yet degrees of greatness or meanness entirely dependent on this single quality of repose.

§ 6. Instances in the Laocoon and Theseus

Particular instances are at present both needless and cannot but be inadequate; needless, because I suppose that every reader, however limited his expe-

rience of art, can supply many for himself, and inadequate, because no number of them could illustrate the full extent of the influence of the expression I believe, however, that by comparing the disgusting convulsions of the Laocoon, with the Elgin Theseus, we may obtain a general idea of the effect of the influence, as shown by its absence in one, and presence in the other, of two works which, as far as artistical merit is concerned, are in some measure parellel, not that I believe, even in this respect, the Laocoon justifiably comparable with the Theseus. I suppose that no group has exercised so pernicious an influence on art as this, a subject ill chosen, meanly conceived and unnaturally treated, recommended to imitation by subtleties of execution and accumulation of technical knowledge.*

* I would also have the reader compare with the meagre lines and contemptible tortures of the Laocoon, the awfulness and quietness of M. Angelo's treatment of a subject in most respects similar, (the plague of the Fiery Serpents,) but of which the choice was justified both by the place which the event holds in the typical system he had to arrange, and by the grandeur of the plague itself, in its multitudinous grasp, and its mystical salvation; sources of sublimity entirely wanting to the slaughter of the Dardan priest. It is good to see how his gigantic intellect reaches after repose, and truthfully finds it, in the falling hand of the near figure, and in the deathful decline of that whose hands are held up even in their venomed coldness to the cross; and though irrelevant to our present purpose, it is well also to note how the grandeur of this treatment results, not merely from choice, but from a greater knowledge and more faithful rendering of truth. For whatever knowledge of the human frame there may be in the Laocoon, there is certainly none of the habits of serpents. The fixing of the snake's head in the side of the principal figure is as false to nature, as it is poor in composition of line. A large serpent never wants to bite, it wants to hold, it seizes therefore always where it can hold best, by the extremities, or throat, it seizes once and forever, and that before it coils, following up the seizure with the twist of its body round the victim, as invisibly swift as the twist of a whip lash round any hard object it may strike, and then it holds fast, never moving the jaws or the body; if its prey has any power of struggling left, it throws round another coil, without quitting the hold with the jaws; if Laocoon had had to do with real serpents, instead of pieces of tape with heads to them, he would have been held still, and not allowed to throw his arms or legs about. It is most instructive to observe the accuracy of Michael Angelo in the rendering of these circumstances; the binding of the arms to the body, and the knotting of the whole mass of agony together, until we hear the crashing of the bones beneath the grisly sliding of the engine folds. Note also the expression in all the figures of another circumstance, the torpor and cold numbness of the limbs induced by the serpent venom, which, though justifiably overlooked by

§ 7. And in altar tombs.

In Christian art, it would be well to compare the feeling of the finer among the altar tombs of the middle ages, with any monumental works after Michael Angelo, perhaps more especially with works of Roubilliac or Canova.

In the Cathedral of Lucca, near the entrance door of the north transept, there is a monument of Jacopo della Quercia's to Ilaria di Caretto, the wife of Paolo Guinigi. I name it not as more beautiful or perfect than other examples of the same period, but as furnishing an instance of the exact and right mean between the rigidity and rudeness of the earlier monumental effigies, and the morbid imitation of life, sleep, or death, of which the fashion has taken place in modern times.* She is lying on a simple couch, with a hound at her feet, not on the side, but with the head laid

the sculptor of the Laocoon, as well as by Virgil—in consideration of the rapidity of the death by crushing, adds infinitely to the power of the Florentine's conception, and would have been better hinted by Virgil, than that sickening distribution of venom on the garlands. In fact, Virgil has missed both of truth and impressiveness every way—the "morsu depascitur" is unnatural butchery—the "perfusus veneno" gratuitous foulness—the "clamores horrendos," impossible degradation; compare carefully the remarks on this statue in Sir Charles Bell's Essay on Expression, (third edition, p. 192,) where he has most wisely and uncontrovertibly deprived the statue of all claim to expression of energy and fortitude of mind, and shown its common and coarse intent of mere bodily exertion and agony, while he has confirmed Payne Knight's just condemnation of the passage in Virgil.

If the reader wishes to see the opposite or imaginative view of the subject, let him compare Winkelmann; and Schiller, Letters on Æsthetic Culture.

* Whenever, in monumental work, the sculptor reaches a deceptive appearance of life or death, or of concomitant details, he has gone too far. The statue should be felt for such, not look like a dead or sleeping body; it should not convey the impression of a corpse, nor of sick and outwearied flesh, but it should be the marble *image* of death or weariness. So the concomitants should be distinctly marble, severe and monumental in their lines, not shroud, not bedclothes, not actual armor nor brocade, not a real soft pillow, not a downright hard stuffed mattress, but the mere type and suggestion of these: a certain rudeness and incompletion of finish is very noble in all. Not that they are to be unnatural, such lines as are given should be pure and true, and clear of the hardness and mannered rigidity of the strictly Gothic types, but lines so few and grand as to appeal to the imagination only, and always to stop short of realization. There is a monument put up lately by a modern Italian sculptor in one of the side chapels of Santa Croce, the face fine and the execution dexterous. But it looks as if the person had been restless all night, and the artist admitted to a faithful study of the disturbed bedclothes in the morning.

straight and simply on the hard pillow, in which, let it be observed, there is no effort at deceptive imitation of pressure. It is understood as a pillow, but not mistaken for one. The hair is bound in a flat braid over the fair brow, the sweet and arched eyes are closed, the tenderness of the loving lips is set and quiet, there is that about them which forbids breath, something which is not death nor sleep, but the pure image of both. The hands are not lifted in prayer, neither folded, but the arms are laid at length upon the body, and the hands cross as they fall. The feet are hidden by the drapery, and the forms of the limbs concealed, but not their tenderness.

If any of us, after staying for a time beside this tomb, could see through his tears, one of the vain and unkind encumbrances of the grave, which, in these hollow and heartless days, feigned sorrow builds to foolish pride, he would, I believe, receive such a lesson of love as no coldness could refuse, no fatuity forget, and no insolence disobey.

CHAPTER VIII.

OF SYMMETRY, OR THE TYPE OF DIVINE JUSTICE.

§ 1. Symmetry what and how found in organic nature.

We shall not be long detained by the consideration of this, the fourth constituent of beauty, as its nature is universally felt and understood. In all perfectly beautiful objects, there is found the opposition of one part to another and a reciprocal balance obtained; in animals the balance being commonly between opposite sides, (note the disagreeablenes occasioned by the exception in flat fish, having the eyes on one side of the head,) but in vegetables the opposition is less distinct, as in the boughs on opposite sides of trees, and the leaves and sprays on each side of the boughs, and in dead matter less perfect still, often amounting only to a certain tendency towards a balance, as in the opposite sides of valleys and alternate windings of streams. In things in which perfect symmetry is from their nature impossible or improper, a balance must be at least in some measure expressed before they can be beheld with pleasure. Hence the necessity of what artists require as opposing lines or masses in composition, the propriety of which, as well as their value, depends chiefly on their inartificial and natural invention. Absolute equality is not required, still less absolute similarity. A mass of subdued color may be balanced by a point of a powerful one, and a long and latent line overpowered by a short and conspicuous one. The only error against which it is necessary to guard the reader with respect to symmetry, is the confounding it with proportion, though it seems strange that the two terms could ever have been used as synonymous. Symmetry is the *opposition* of *equal* quantities to each other. Proportion the *connection* of *unequal* quantities with each other. The property of a tree in sending out equal boughs on opposite sides is symmetrical. Its sending out shorter and smaller

§ 2. How necessary in art.

towards the top, proportional. In the human face its balance of opposite sides is symmetry, its division upwards, proportion.

§ 3. To what its agreeableness is referable. Various instances.

Whether the agreeableness of symmetry be in any way referable to its expression of the Aristotelian ἰσότης, that is to say of abstract justice, I leave the reader to determine; I only assert respecting it, that it is necessary to the dignity of every form, and that by the removal of it we shall render the other elements of beauty comparatively ineffectual: though on the other hand, it is so be observed that it is rather a mode of arrangement of qualities than a quality itself; and hence symmetry has little power over the mind, unless all the other constituents of beauty be found together with it. A form may be symmetrical and ugly, as many Elizabethan ornaments, and yet not so ugly as it had been if unsymmetrical, but bettered always by increasing degrees of symmetry; as in star figures, wherein there is a circular symmetry of many like members, whence their frequent use for the plan and ground of ornamental designs; so also it is observable that foliage in which the leaves are concentrically grouped, as in the chestnuts, and many shrubs —rhododendrons for instance—(whence the perfect beauty of the Alpine rose)—is far nobler in its effect than any other, so that the sweet chestnut of all trees most fondly and frequently occurs in the landscape of Tintoret and Titian, beside which all other landscape grandeur vanishes: and even in the meanest things the rule holds, as in the kaleidoscope, wherein agreeableness is given to forms altogether accidental merely by their repetition and reciprocal opposition; which orderly balance and arrangement are essential to the perfect operation of the more earnest and solemn qualities of the beautiful, as being heavenly in their nature, and contrary to the violence and disorganization of sin, so that the seeking of them and submission to them is always marked in minds that have been subjected to high moral discipline, constant in all the great religious painters, to the degree of being an offence and a scorn to men of less tuned and tranquil feeling. Equal ranks of saints are placed on each side of the picture, if there be a kneeling figure on one side, there is a corresponding one on the other, the attendant angels beneath and above are arranged in like order. The Raffaelle at Blenheim, the Madonna di St. Sisto, the St. Cicilia, and

§ 4. Especially in religious art.

all the works of Perugino, Francia, and John Bellini present some such form, and the balance at least is preserved even in pictures of action necessitating variety of grouping, as always by Giotto; and by Ghirlandajo in the introduction of his chorus-like side figures, and by Tintoret most eminently in his noblest work, the Crucifixion, where not only the grouping but the arrangement of light is absolutely symmetrical. Where there is no symmetry, the effects of passion and violence are increased, and many very sublime pictures derive their sublimity from the want of it, but they lose proportionally in the diviner quality of beauty. In landscape the same sense of symmetry is preserved, as we shall presently see, even to artificialness, by the greatest men, and it is one of the principal sources of deficient feeling in the landscapes of the present day, that the symmetry of nature is sacrificed to irregular picturesqueness. Of this, however, hereafter.

CHAPTER IX

OF PURITY, OR THE TYPE OF DIVINE ENERGY.

§ 1. The influence of light as a sacred symbol.

It may at first appear strange that I have not in my enumeration of the types of Divine attributes, included that which is certainly the most visible and evident of all, as well as the most distinctly expressed in Scripture; God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. But I could not logically class the presence of an actual substance or motion with mere conditions and modes of being, neither could I logically separate from any of these, that which is evidently necessary to the perception of all. And it is also to be observed, that though the love of light is more instinctive in the human heart than any other of the desires connected with beauty, we can hardly separate its agreeableness in its own nature from the sense of its necessity and value for the purposes of life, neither the abstract painfulness of darkness from the sense of danger and incapacity connected with it; and note also that it is not *all* light, but light possessing the universal qualities of beauty, diffused or infinite rather than in points, tranquil, not startling and variable, pure, not sullied or oppressed, which is indeed pleasant and perfectly typical of the Divine nature.

§ 2. The idea of purity connected with it.

Observe, however, that there is one quality, the idea of which had been just introduced in connection with light, which might have escaped us in the consideration of mere matter, namely purity, and yet I think that the original notion of this quality is altogether material, and has only been attributed to color when such color is suggestive of the condition of matter from which we originally received the idea. For I see not in the abstract how one color should be considered purer than another, except as more or less compounded, whereas there is certainly a sense of purity or impurity in the most com-

pound and neutral colors, as well as in the simplest, a quality difficult to define, and which the reader will probably be surprised by my calling the type of energy, with which it has certainly little traceable connection in the mind.

§ 3. Originally derived from conditions of matter.

I believe however if we carefully analyze the nature of our ideas of impurity in general, we shall find them refer especially to conditions of matter in which its various elements are placed in a relation incapable of healthy or proper operation; and most distinctly to conditions in which the negation of vital or energetic action is most evident, as in corruption and decay of all kinds, wherein particles which once, by their operation on each other, produced a living and energetic whole, are reduced to a condition of perfect passiveness, in which they are seized upon and appropriated, one by one, piecemeal, by whatever has need of them, without any power of resistance or energy of their own. And thus there is a peculiar painfulness attached to any associations of inorganic with organic matter, such as appear to involve the inactivity and feebleness of the latter, so that things which are not felt to be foul in their own nature, yet become so in association with things of greater inherent energy as dust or earth, which in a mass excites no painful sensation, excites a most disagreeable one when strewing or staining an animal's skin, because it implies a decline and deadening of the vital and healthy power of the skin.

§ 4. Associated ideas adding to the power of the impression. Influence of clearness.

But all reasoning about this impression is rendered difficult, by the host of associated ideas connected with it; for the ocular sense of impurity connected with corruption is infinitely enhanced by the offending of other senses and by the grief and horror of it in its own nature, as the special punishment and evidence of sin, and on the other hand, the ocular delight in purity is mingled, as I before observed, with the love of the mere element of light, as a type of wisdom and of truth; whence it seems to me that we admire the transparency of bodies, though probably it is still rather owing to our sense of more perfect order and arrangement of particles, and not to our love of light, that we look upon a piece of rock crystal as purer than a piece of marble, and on the marble as purer than a piece of chalk. And let it be observed also that the most lovely objects in nature are only partially transparent. I suppose the utmost possible

§ 5. Perfect beauty of surface, in what consisting.

sense of beauty is conveyed by a feebly translucent, smooth, but not lustrous surface of white, and pale warm red, subdued by the most pure and delicate grays, as in the finer portions of the human frame; in wreaths of snow, and in white plumage under rose light,* so Viola of Olivia in Twelfth Night, and Homer of Atrides wounded.† And I think that transparency and lustre, both beautiful in themselves, are incompatible with the highest beauty because they destroy form, on the full perception of which more of the divinely character of the object depends than upon its color. Hence, in the beauty of snow and of flesh, so much translucency is allowed as is consistent with the full explanation of the forms, while we are suffered to receive more intense impressions of light and transparency from other objects which, nevertheless, owing to their necessarily unperceived form, are not perfectly nor affectingly beautiful. A fair forehead outshines its diamond diadem. The sparkle of the cascade withdraws not our eyes from the snowy summits in their evening silence.

* Th reader will observe that I am speaking at present of mere material qualities. If he would obtain perfect ideas respecting loveliness of luminous surface, let him closely observe a swan with its wings expanded in full light five minutes before sunset. The human cheek or the rose leaf are perhaps hardly so pure, and the forms of snow, though individually as beautiful, are less exquisitely combined.

† ὡς δ' ὅτε τίς τ' ἐλέφαντα γυνὴ φοίνικι μίηνῃ
Μηονὶς.

So Spenser of Shamefacedness, an exquisite piece of glowing color—and sweetly of Belphoebe—(so the roses and lilies of all poets.) Compare the making of the image of Florimell.

"The substance whereof she the body made
Was purest snow, in massy mould congealed,
Which she had gathered in a shady glade
Of the Riphoean hills.
The same she tempered with fine mercury,
And mingled them with perfect vermily."

With Una he perhaps overdoes the white a little. She is two degrees of comparison above snow. Compare his questioning in the Hymn to Beauty, about that mixture made of colors fair; and goodly temperament, of pure complexion.

"Hath white and red in it such wondrous power
That it can pierce through the eyes into the heart?"

Where the distinction between typical and vital beauty is very gloriously carried out.

It may seem strange to many readers that I have not spoken of purity in that sense in which it is most frequently used, as a type of sinlessness. I do not deny that the frequent metaphorical use of it in Scripture may have and ought to have much influence on the sympathies with which we regard it, and that probably the immediate agreeableness of it to most minds arises far more from this source than from that to which I have chosen to attribute it. But, in the first place, if it be indeed in the signs of Divine and not of human attributes that beauty consists, I see not how the idea of sin can be formed with respect to the Deity, for it is an idea of a relation borne by us to Him, and not in any way to be attached to his abstract nature. And if the idea of sin is incapable of being formed with respect to Him, so also is its negative, for we cannot form an idea of negation, where we cannot form an idea of presence. If for instance one could conceive of taste or flavor in a proposition of Euclid, so also might we of insipidity, but if not of the one, then not of the other. So that, in speaking of the goodness of God, it cannot be that we mean anything more that his Love, Mercifulness, and Justice, and these attributes I have shown to be expressed by other qualities of beauty, and I cannot trace any rational connection between them and the idea of spotlessness in matter. Neither can I trace any more distinct relation between this idea, and any of the virtues which make up the righteousness of man, except perhaps those of truth and openness, of which I have already spoken as more expressed by the transparency than the mere purity of matter. So that I conceive the whole use of the terms purity, spotlessness, etc. in moral subjects, to be merely metaphorical, and that it is rather that we illustrate these virtues by the desirableness of material purity, than that we desire material purity because it is illustrative of these virtues.

§ 6. Purity only metaphorically a type of sinlessness.

I repeat, then, that the only idea which I think can be legitimately connected with purity of matter, is this of vital and energetic connection among its particles, and that the idea of foulness is essentially connected with dissolution and death. Thus the purity of the rock, contrasted with the foulness of dust or mould, is expressed by the epithet "living," very singularly given in the rock, in almost all

§ 7. Energy, how expressed by purity of matter.

languages; singularly I say, because life is almost the last attribute one would ascribe to stone, but for this visible energy and connection of its particles: and so of water as opposed to stagnancy. And I do not think that, however pure a powder or dust may be, the idea of beauty is ever connected with it, for it is not the mere purity, but the *active* condition of the substance which is desired, so that as soon as it shoots into crystals, or gathers into efflorescence, a sensation of active or real purity is received which was not felt in the calcined caput mortuum.

§ 8. And of color.

And again in color. I imagine that the quality of it which we term purity is dependent on the full energizing of the rays that compose it, whereof if in compound hues any are overpowered and killed by the rest, so as to be of no value nor operation, foulness is the consequence; while so long as all act together, whether side by side, or from pigments seen one through the other, so that all the coloring matter employed comes into play in the harmony desired, and none be quenched nor killed, purity results. And so in all cases I suppose that pureness is made to us desirable, because expressive of the constant presence and energizing of the Deity in matter, through which all things live and move, and have their being, and that foulness is painful as the accompaniment of disorder and decay, and always indicative of the withdrawal of Divine support. And the practical analogies of life, the invariable connection of outward foulness with mental sloth and degradation, as well as with bodily lethargy and disease, together with the contrary indications of freshness and purity belonging to every healthy and active organic frame, (singularly seen in the effort of the young leaves when first their inward energy prevails over the earth, pierces its corruption, and shakes its dust away from their own white purity of life,) all these circumstances strengthen the instinct by associations countless and irresistible. And then, finally, with the idea of purity comes that of spirituality, for the essential characteristic of matter is its inertia, whence, by adding to it purity or energy, we may in some measure spiritualize even matter itself. Thus in the descriptions of the Apocalypse it is its purity that fits it for its place in heaven; the river of the water of life, that proceeds out of the throne

§ 9. Spirituality, how so expressed.

of the Lamb, is clear as crystal, and the pavement of the city is pure gold, like unto clear glass.*

* I have not spoken here of any of the associations connected with warmth or coolness of color, they are partly connected with vital beauty, compare Chap. xiv. § 22, 23, and partly with impressions of the sublime, the discussion of which is foreign to the present subject; purity, however, it is which gives value to both, for neither warm nor cool color, can be beautiful, if impure.

Neither have I spoken of any questions relating to melodies of color, a subject of separate science—whose general principle has been already stated in the seventh chapter respecting unity of sequence. Those qualities only are here noted which give absolute beauty, whether to separate color or to melodies of it—for all melodies are not beautiful, but only those which are expressive of certain pleasant or solemn emotions; and the rest startling, or curious, or cheerful, or exciting, or sublime, but not beautiful, (and so in music.) And all questions relating to this grandeur, cheerfulness, or other characteristic impression of color must be considered under the head of ideas of relation.

CHAPTER X.

OF MODERATION, OR THE TYPE OF GOVERNMENT BY LAW.

§ 1. Meaning of the terms Chasteness and Refinement.

Of objects which, in respect of the qualities hitherto considered, appear to have equal claims to regard, we find, nevertheless, that certain are preferred to others in consequence of an attractive power, usually expressed by the terms "chasteness, refinement, or elegance," and it appears also that things which in other respects have little in them of natural beauty, and are of forms altogether simple and adapted to simple uses, are capable of much distinction and desirableness in consequence of these qualities only. It is of importance to discover the real nature of the ideas thus expressed.

§ 2. How referable to temporary fashions.

Something of the peculiar meaning of the words is referable to the authority of fashion and the exclusiveness of pride, owing to which that which is the mode of a particular time is submissively esteemed, and that which by its costliness or its rarity is of difficult attainment, or in any way appears to have been chosen as the best of many things, (which is the original sense of the words elegant and exquisite,) is esteemed for the witness it bears to the dignity of the chooser.

But neither of these ideas are in any way connected with eternal beauty, neither do they at all account for that agreeableness of color and form which is especially termed chasteness, and which it would seem to be a characteristic of rightly trained mind in all things to prefer, and of common minds to reject.

§ 3. How to the perception of completion.

There is however another character of artificial productions, to which these terms have partial reference, which it is of some importance to note, that of finish, exactness, or refinement, which are commonly desired in the works of men, owing both to their difficulty of accomplishment and consequent expression of care and power (compare Chapter on Ideas of Power, Part I. Sect. i.,) and from their

greater resemblance to the working of God, whose "absolute exactness," says Hooker, "all things imitate, by tending to that which is most exquisite in every particular." And there is not a greater sign of the imperfection of general taste, than its capability of contentment with forms and things which, professing completion, are yet not exact nor complete, as in the vulgar with wax and clay and china figures, and in bad sculptors with an unfinished and clay-like modelling of surface, and curves and angles of no precision or delicacy; and in general, in all common and unthinking persons with an imperfect rendering of that which might be pure and fine, as church-wardens are content to lose the sharp lines of stone carving under clogging obliterations of whitewash, and as the modern Italians scrape away and polish white all the sharpness and glory of the carvings on their old churches, as most miserably and pitifully on St. Mark's at Venice, and the Baptisteries of Pistoja and Pisa, and many others; so also the delight of vulgar painters in coarse and slurred painting, merely for the sake of its coarseness,*

§ 4. Finish, by great masters esteemed essential.

* It is to be carefully noted that when rude execution is evidently not the result of imperfect feeling and desire (as in these men above named, it is) but of thought; either impatient, which there was necessity to note swiftly, or impetuous, which it was well to note in mighty manner, as pre-eminently and in both kinds the case with Tintoret, and often with Michael Angelo, and in lower and more degraded modes with Rubens, and generally in the sketches and first thoughts of great masters; there is received a very noble pleasure, connected both with ideas of power (compare again Part I. Sect. ii. Chap. I.) and with certain actions of the imagination of which we shall speak presently. But this pleasure is not received from the beauty of the work, for nothing can be perfectly beautiful unless complete, but from its simplicity and sufficiency to its immediate purpose, where the purpose is not of beauty at all, as often in things rough-hewn, pre-eminently for instance in the stones of the foundations of the Pitti and Strozzi palaces, whose noble rudeness is to be opposed both to the useless polish, and the barbarous rustications of modern times, (although indeed this instance is not without exception to be received, for the majesty of these rocky buildings depends also in some measure upon the real beauty and finish of the natural curvilinear fractures, opposed to the coarseness of human chiselling,) and again, as it respects works of higher art, the pleasure of their hasty or imperfect execution is not indicative of their beauty, but of their majesty and fulness of thought and vastness of power. Shade is only beautiful when it magnifies and sets forth the forms of fair things, so negligence is only noble when it is, as Fuseli hath it, "the shadow of energy." Which that it may be, secure the substance and the shade will follow, but let the artist beware of stealing the manner of giant intellects when he has not

as of Spagnoletto, Salvator, or Murillo, opposed to the divine finish which the greatest and mightiest of men disdained not, but rather wrought out with painfulness and life spending; as Leonardo and Michael Angelo, (for the latter, however many things he left unfinished, did finish, if at all, with a refinement that the eye cannot follow, but the feeling only, as in the Pieta of Genoa,) and Perugino always, even to the gilding of single hairs among his angel tresses, and the young Raffaelle, when he was heaven taught, and Angelico, and Pinturicchio, and John Bellini, and all other such serious and loving men. Only it is to be observed that this finish is not a part or constituent of beauty, but the full and ultimate rendering of it, so that it is an idea only connected with the works of men, for all the works of the Deity are finished with the same, that is, infinite care and completion: and so what degrees of beauty exist among them can in no way be dependent upon this source, inasmuch as there are between them no degrees of care. And therefore, as there certainly is admitted a difference of degree in what we call chasteness, even in Divine work, (compare the hollyhock or the sunflower with the vale lily,) we must seek for it some other explanation and source than this.

§ 5. Moderation, its nature and value.

And if, bringing down our ideas of it from complicated objects to simple lines and colors, we analyze and regard them carefully, I think we shall be able to trace them to an under-current of constantly agreeable feeling, excited by the appearance in material things of a self-restrained liberty, that is to say, by the image of that acting of God with regard to all his creation, wherein, though free to operate in whatever arbitrary, sudden, violent, or inconstant ways he will, he yet, if we may reverently so speak, restrains in himself this his

their intention, and of assuming large modes of treatment when he has little thoughts to treat. There is large difference between indolent impatience of labor and intellectual impatience of delay, large difference between leaving things unfinished because we have more to do, or because we are satisfied with what we have done. Tintoret, who prayed hard, and hardly obtained, that he might be permitted, the charge of his colors only being borne, to paint a new built house from base to battlement, was not one to shun labor, it is the pouring in upon him of glorious thoughts in inexpressible multitude that his sweeping hand follows so fast. It is as easy to know the slightness of earnest haste from the slightness of blunt feeling, indolence, or affectation, as it is to know the dust of a race, from the dust of dissolution.

omnipotent liberty, and works always in consistent modes, called by us laws. And this restraint or moderation, according to the words of Hooker, ("that which doth moderate the force and power, that which doth appoint the form and measure of working, the same we term a law,") is in the Deity not restraint, such as it is said of creatures, but, as again says Hooker, "the very being of God is a law to his working," so that every appearance of painfulness or want of power and freedom in material things is wrong and ugly; for the right restraint, the image of Divine operation, is both in them, and in men, a willing and not painful stopping short of the utmost degree to which their power might reach, and the appearance of fettering or confinement is the cause of ugliness in the one, as the slightest painfulness or effort in restraint is a sign of sin in the other.

§ 6. It is the girdle of beauty.

I have put this attribute of beauty last, because I consider it the girdle and safeguard of all the rest, and in this respect the most essential of all, for it is possible that a certain degree of beauty may be attained even in the absence of one of its other constituents, as sometimes in some measure without symmetry or without unity. But the least appearance of violence or extravagance, of the want of moderation and restraint, is, I think, destructive of all beauty whatsoever in everything, color, form, motion, language, or thought, giving rise to that which in color we call glaring, in form inelegant, in motion ungraceful, in language coarse, in thought undisciplined, in all unchastened; which qualities are in everything most painful, because the signs of disobedient and irregular operation. And herein we at last find the reason of that which has been so often noted respecting the subtilty and almost invisibility of natural curves and colors, and why it is that we look on those lines as least beautiful which fall into wide and far license of curvature, and as most beautiful which approach nearest (so that the curvilinear character be distinctly asserted) to the government of the right line, as in the pure and severe curves of the draperies of the religious painters; and thus in color it is not red, but rose-color which is most beautiful, neither such actual green as we find in summer foliage partly, and in our painting of it constantly; but such gray green as that into which nature modifies her distant tints, or such pale green and uncertain as we see in

§ 7. How found in natural curves and colors.

sunset sky, and in the clefts of the glacier and the chrysoprase, and the sea-foam; and so of all colors, not that they may not sometimes be deep and full, but that there is a solemn moderation even in their very fulness, and a holy reference beyond and out of their own nature to great harmonies by which they are governed, and in obedience to which is their glory. Whereof the ignorance is shown in all evil colorists by the violence and positiveness of their hues, and by dulness and discordance consequent, for the very brilliancy and real power of all color is dependent on the chastening of it, as of a voice on its gentleness, and as of action on its calmness, and as all moral vigor on self-command. And therefore as that virtue which men last, and with most difficulty attain unto, and which many attain not at all, and yet that which is essential to the conduct and almost to the being of all other virtues, since neither imagination, nor invention, nor industry, nor sensibility, nor energy, nor any other good having, is of full avail without this of self-command, whereby works truly masculine and mighty are produced, and by the signs of which they are separated from that lower host of things brilliant, magnificent and redundant, and farther yet from that of the loose, the lawless, the exaggerated, the insolent, and the profane, I would have the necessity of it foremost among all our inculcating, and the name of it largest among all our inscribing, in so far that, over the doors of every school of Art, I would have this one word, relieved out in deep letters of pure gold,—

§ 8. How difficult of attainment, yet essential to all good.

CHAPTER XI.

GENERAL INFERENCES RESPECTING TYPICAL BEAUTY.

§ 1. The subject incompletely treated, yet admitting of general conclusions.

I HAVE now enumerated, and in some measure explained those characteristics of mere matter by which I conceive it becomes agreeable to the theoretic faculty, under whatever form, dead, organized, or animated, it may present itself. It will be our task in the succeeding volume to examine, and illustrate by examples, the mode in which these characteristics appear in every division of creation, in stones, mountains, waves, clouds, and all organic bodies; beginning with vegetables, and then taking instances in the range of animals from the mollusc to man; examining how one animal form is nobler than another, by the more manifest presence of these attributes, and chiefly endeavoring to show how much there is of admirable and lovely, even in what is commonly despised. At present I have only to mark the conclusions at which we have as yet arrived respecting the rank of the theoretic faculty, and then to pursue the inquiry farther into the nature of vital beauty.

As I before said, I pretend not to have enumerated all the sources of material beauty, nor the analogies connected with them; it is probable that others may occur to many readers, or to myself as I proceed into more particular inquiry, but I am not careful to collect all conceivable evidence on the subject. I desire only to assert and prove some certain principles, and by means of these to show, in some measure, the inherent worthiness and glory of God's works and something of the relations they bear to each other and to us, leaving the subject to be fully pursued, as it only can be, by the ardor and affection of those whom it may interest.

§ 2. Typical beauty not created for man's sake.

The qualities above enumerated are not to be considered as stamped upon matter for our teaching or enjoyment only, but as the necessary consequence of

the perfection of God's working, and the inevitable stamp of his image on what he creates. For it would be inconsistent with his Infinite perfection to work imperfectly in any place, or in any matter; wherefore we do not find that flowers and fair trees, and kindly skies, are given only where man may see them and be fed by them, but the Spirit of God works everywhere alike, where there is no eye to see, covering all lonely places with an equal glory, using the same pencil and outpouring the same splendor, in the caves of the waters where the sea-snakes swim, and in the desert where the satyrs dance, among the fir-trees of the stork, and the rocks of the conies, as among those higher creatures whom he has made capable witnesses of his working. Nevertheless, I think that the admission of different degrees of this glory and image of himself upon creation, has the look of something meant especially for us; for although, in pursuance of the appointed system of government by universal laws, these same degrees exist where we cannot witness them, yet the existence of degrees at all seems at first unlikely in Divine work, and I cannot see reason for it unless that palpable one of increasing in us the understanding of the sacred characters by showing us the results of their comparative absence. For I know not that if all things had been equally beautiful, we could have received the idea of beauty at all, or if we had, certainly it had become a matter of indifference to us, and of little thought, whereas through the beneficent ordaining of degrees in its manifestation, the hearts of men are stirred by its occasional occurrence in its noblest form, and all their energies are awakened in the pursuit of it, and endeavor to arrest it or recreate it for themselves. But whatever doubt there may be respecting the exact amount of modification of created things admitted with reference to us, there can be none respecting the dignity of that faculty by which we receive the mysterious evidence of their divine origin. The fact of our deriving constant pleasure from whatever is a type or semblance of Divine attributes, and from nothing but that which is so, is the most glorious of all that can be demonstrated of human nature; it not only sets a great gulf of specific separation between us and the lower animals, but it seems a promise of a communion ultimately deep, close, and conscious, with the Being whose darkened manifestations we here feebly and

§ 3. But degrees of it for his sake admitted.

§ 4. What encouragement hence to be received.

unthinkingly delight in. Probably to every order of intelligence more of his image becomes palpable in all around them, and the glorified spirits and the angels have perceptions as much more full and rapturous than ours, as ours than those of beasts and creeping things. And receiving it, as we must, for an universal axiom that "no natural desire can be entirely frustrate," and seeing that these desires are indeed so unfailing in us that they have escaped not the reasoners of any time, but were held divine of old, and in even heathen countries,* it cannot be but that there is in these visionary pleasures, lightly as we now regard them, cause for thankfulness, ground for hope, anchor for faith, more than in all the other manifold gifts and guidances, wherewith God crowns the years, and hedges the paths of men.

* Ἡ δὲ τελεία ἐυδαιμονία θεωρητική τίς ἐστιν ἐνέργεια. * * τοῖς μὲν γὰρ θεδις ἅπας ὁ βίος μακάριος, τοῖς δ' ἀνθρώποις, ἐφ' ὅσον ὁμοίωμά τι τῆς τοιάυτης ἐνεργείας ὑπάρχει. ὧν δ' ἄλλων ζῴων οὐδὲν ἐυδαιμονεῖ, ἐπειδὴ οὐδαμῇ κοινωνεῖ θεωρίας.—Arist. Eth. Lib. 10th. The concluding book of the Ethics should be carefully read. It is all most valuable.

CHAPTER XII.

OF VITAL BEAUTY. FIRST, AS RELATIVE.

§ 1 Transition from typical to vital Beauty.

I PROCEED more particularly to examine the nature of that second kind of beauty of which I spoke in the third chapter, as consisting in "the appearance of felicitous fulfilment of function in living things." I have already noticed the example of very pure and high typical beauty which is to be found in the lines and gradations of unsullied snow: If, passing to the edge of a sheet of it, upon the lower Alps, early in May, we find, as we are nearly sure to find, two or three little round openings pierced in it, and through these emergent, a slender, pensive, fragile flower* whose small dark, purple-fringed bell hangs down and shudders over the icy cleft that it has cloven, as if partly wondering at its own recent grave, and partly dying of very fatigue after its hard won victory; we shall be, or we ought to be, moved by a totally different impression of loveliness from that which we receive among the dead ice and the idle clouds. There is now uttered to us a call for sympathy, now offered to us an image of moral purpose and achievement, which, however unconscious or senseless the creature may indeed be that so seems to call, cannot be heard without affection, nor contemplated without worship, by any of us whose heart is rightly tuned, or whose mind is clearly and surely sighted.

Throughout the whole of the organic creation every being in a perfect state exhibits certain appearances, or evidences, of happiness, and besides is in its nature, its desires, its modes of nourishment, habitation, and death, illustrative or expressive of certain moral dispositions or principles. Now, first, in the keenness of the sympathy which we feel in the happiness, real or apparent, of all organic beings, and which, as we shall presently see, invariably prompts us, from the joy we have in it, to look upon those as

* Soldanella Alpina.

most lovely which are most happy; and secondly, in the justness of the moral sense which rightly reads the lesson they are all intended to teach, and classes them in orders of worthiness and beauty according to the rank and nature of that lesson, whether it be of warning or example, of those that wallow or of those that soar, of the fiend-hunted swine by the Gennesaret lake, or of the dove returning to its ark of rest; in our right accepting and reading of all this, consists, I say, the ultimately perfect condition of that noble theoretic faculty, whose place in the system of our nature I have already partly vindicated with respect to typical, but which can only fully be established with respect to vital beauty.

§ 2. The perfection of the theoretic faculty as concerned with vital beauty, is charity.

Its first perfection, therefore, relating to vital beauty, is the kindness and unselfish fulness of heart, which receives the utmost amount of pleasure from the happiness of all things. Of which in high degree the heart of man is incapable, neither what intense enjoyment the angels may have in all that they see of things that move and live, and in the part they take in the shedding of God's kindness upon them, can we know or conceive: only in proportion as we draw near to God, and are made in measure like unto him, can we increase this our possession of charity, of which the entire essence is in God only.

Wherefore it is evident that even the ordinary exercise of this faculty implies a condition of the whole moral being in some measure right and healthy, and that to the entire exercise of it there is necessary the entire perfection of the Christian character, for he who loves not God, nor his brother, cannot love the grass beneath his feet and the creatures that fill those spaces in the universe which he needs not, and which live not for his uses; nay, he has seldom grace to be grateful even to those that love him and serve him, while, on the other hand, none can love God nor his human brother without loving all things which his Father loves, nor without looking upon them every one as in that respect his brethren also, and perhaps worthier than he, if in the under concords they have to fill, their part is touched more truly. Wherefore it is good to read of that kindness and humbleness of St. Francis of Assisi, who spoke never to bird nor to cicala, nor even to wolf and beast of prey, but as his brother; and so we find are moved the minds of all good and mighty men, as in the lesson

that we have from the Mariner of Coleridge, and yet more truly and rightly taught in the Heartleap well, "never to blend our pleasure, or our pride, with sorrow of the meanest thing that feels," and again in the White Doe of Rylstone, with the added teaching of that gift, which we have from things beneath us, in thanks for the love they cannot equally return; that anguish of our own "is tempered and allayed by sympathies. Aloft ascending and descending deep. Even to the inferior kinds," so that I know not of anything more destructive of the whole theoretic faculty, not to say of the Christian character and human intellect, than those accursed sports in which man makes of himself, cat, tiger, serpent, chaetodon, and alligator in one, and gathers into one continuance of cruelty for his amusement all the devices that brutes sparingly and at intervals use against each other for their necessities.*

§ 3. Only with respect to plants, less affection than sympathy.

As we pass from those beings of whose happiness and pain we are certain to those in which it is doubtful or only seeming, as possibly in plants, (though I would fain hold, if I might, "the faith that every flower, enjoys the air it breathes," neither do I ever crush or gather one without some pain,) yet our feeling for them has in it more of sympathy than of actual love, as receiving from them in delight far more than we can give; for love, I think, chiefly grows in giving, at least its essence is the desire of doing good, or giving happiness, and we cannot feel the desire of that which we cannot conceive, so that if we conceive not of a plant as capable of pleasure, we cannot desire to give it pleasure, that is, we cannot love it in the entire sense of the term.

Nevertheless, the sympathy of very lofty and sensitive minds usually reaches so far as to the conception of life in the plant, and so to love, as with Shelley, of the sensitive plant, and Shakspeare always, as he has taught us in the sweet voices of Ophelia and Perdita, and Wordsworth always, as of the daffodils, and the celandine.

* I would have Mr. Landseer, before he gives us any more writing otters, or yelping packs, reflect whether that which is best worthy of contemplation in a hound be its ferocity, or in an otter its agony, or in a human being its victory, hardly achieved even with the aid of its more sagacious brutal allies over a poor little fish-catching creature, a foot long.

"It doth not love the shower, nor seek the cold.
This neither is its courage, nor its choice,
But its necessity in being old,"—

and so all other great poets (that is to say, great seers ;*) nor do I believe that any mind, however rude, is without some slight perception or acknowledgment of joyfulness in breathless things, as most certainly there are none but feel instinctive delight in the appearances of such enjoyment.

§ 4. Which is proportioned to the appearance of energy in the plants.

For it is matter of easy demonstration, that setting the characters of typical beauty aside, the pleasure afforded by every organic form is in proportion to its appearance of healthy vital energy; as in a rose-bush, setting aside all the considerations of gradated flushing of color and fair folding of line, which it shares with the cloud or the snow-wreath, we find in and through all this, certain signs pleasant and acceptable as signs of life and enjoyment in the particular individual plant itself. Every leaf and stalk is seen to have a function, to be constantly exercising that function, and as it seems *solely* for the good and enjoyment of the plant. It is true that reflection will show us that the plant is not living for itself alone, that its life is one of benefaction, that it gives as well as receives, but no sense of this whatsoever mingles with our perception of physical beauty in its forms. Those forms appear to be necessary to its health, the symmetry of its leaflets, the smoothness of its stalks, the vivid green of its shoots, are looked upon by us as signs of the plant's own happiness and perfection; they are useless to us, except as they give us pleasure in our sympathizing with that of the plant, and if we see a leaf withered or shrunk or worm-eaten, we say it is ugly, and feel it to be most painful, not because it hurts *us*, but because it seems to hurt the plant, and conveys to us an idea of pain and disease and failure of life in *it*.

That the amount of pleasure we receive is in exact proportion to the appearance of vigor and sensibility in the plant, is easily proved by observing the effect of those which show the evidences of it in the least degree, as, for instance, any of the cacti not in

* Compare Milton.

"They at her coming sprung
And touched by her fair tendance, gladlier grew."

flower. Their masses are heavy and simple, their growth slow, their various parts jointed on one to another, as if they were buckled or pinned together instead of growing out of each other, (note the singular imposition in many of them, the prickly pear for instance, of the fruit upon the body of the plant, so that it looks like a swelling or disease,) and often farther opposed by harsh truncation of line as in the cactus truncato-phylla. All these circumstances so concur to deprive the plant of vital evidences, that we receive from it more sense of pain than of beauty; and yet even here, the sharpness of the angles, the symmetrical order and strength of the spines, the fresh and even color of the body, are looked for earnestly as signs of healthy condition, our pain is increased by their absence, and indefinitely increased if blotches, and other appearances of bruise and decay interfere with that little life which the plant seems to possess.

The same singular characters belong in animals to the crustacea, as to the lobster, crab, scorpion, etc., and in great measure deprive them of the beauty which we find in higher orders, so that we are reduced to look for their beauty to single parts and joints, and not to the whole animal.

§ 5. This sympathy is unselfish, and does not regard utility.

Fow I wish particularly to impress upon the reader that all these sensations of beauty in the plant arise from our unselfish sympathy with its happiness, and not from any view of the qualities in it which may bring good to us, nor even from our acknowledgment is it of any moral condition beyond that of mere felicity; for such an acknowledgment, belongs to the second operation of the theoretic faculty (compare § 2,) and not to the sympathetic part which we are at present examining; so that we even find that in this respect, the moment we begin to look upon any creature as subordinate to some purpose out of itself, some of the sense of organic beauty is lost. Thus, when we are told that the leaves of a plant are occupied in decomposing carbonic acid, and preparing oxygen for us, we begin to look upon it with some such indifference as upon a gasometer It has become a machine; some of our sense of its happiness is gone; its emanation of inherent life is no longer pure. The bending trunk, waving to and fro in the wind above the waterfall is beautiful because it is happy, though it is perfectly useless to us. The same trunk, hewn down and thrown across the

stream, has lost its beauty. It serves as a bridge,—it has become useful; it lives not for itself, and its beauty is gone, or what it retains is purely typical, dependent on its lines and colors, not on its functions. Saw it into planks, and though now adapted to become permanently useful, its whole beauty is lost forever, or to be regained only in part when decay and ruin shall have withdrawn it again from use, and left it to receive from the hand of nature the velvet moss and varied lichen, which may again suggest ideas of inherent happiness, and tint its mouldering sides with hues of life.

There is something, I think, peculiarly beautiful and instructive in this unselfishness of the theoretic faculty, and in its abhorence of all utility which is based on the pain or destruction of any creature, for in such ministering to each other as is consistent with the essence and energy of both, it takes delight, as in the clothing of the rock by the herbage, and the feeding of the herbage by the stream.

§ 6. Especially with respect to animals.

But still more distinct evidence of its being indeed the expression of happiness to which we look for our first pleasure in organic form, is to be found in the way in which we regard the bodily frame of animals: of which it is to be noted first, that there is not anything which causes so intense and tormenting a sense of ugliness as any scar, wound, monstrosity, or imperfection which seems inconsistent with the animal's ease and health; and that although in vegetables, where there is no immediate sense of pain, we are comparatively little hurt by excrescences and irregularities, but are sometimes even delighted with them, and fond of them, as children of the oak-apple, and sometimes look upon them as more interesting than the uninjured conditions, as in the gnarled and knotted trunks of trees; yet the slightest approach to anything of the kind in animal form is regarded with intense horror, merely from the sense of pain it conveys. And, in the second place, it is to be noted that whenever we dissect the animal frame, or conceive it as dissected, and substitute in our ideas the neatness of mechanical contrivance for the pleasure of the animal; the moment we reduce enjoyment to ingenuity and volition to leverage, that instant all sense of beauty disappears. Take, for instance, the action of the limb of the ostrich, which is beautiful

§ 7. And it is destroyed by evidences of mechanism.

so long as we see it in its swift uplifting along the desert sands, and trace in the tread of it her scorn of the horse and his rider, but would infinitely lose of its impressiveness, if we could see the spring ligament playing backwards and forwards in alternate jerks over the tubercle at the hock joint. Take again the action of the dorsal fin of the shark tribe. So long as we observe the uniform energy of motion in the whole frame, the lash of the tail, bound of body, and instantaneous lowering of the dorsal, to avoid the resistance of the water as it turns, there is high sense of organic power and beauty. But when we dissect the dorsal, and find that its superior ray is supported in its position by a peg in a notch at its base, and that when the fin is to be lowered, the peg has to be taken out, and when it is raised put in again; although we are filled with wonder at the ingenuity of the mechanical contrivance, all our sense of beauty is gone, and not to be recovered until we again see the fin playing on the animal's body, apparently by its own will alone, with the life running along its rays. It is by a beautiful ordinance of the Creator that all these mechanisms are concealed from sight, though open to investigation, and that in all which is outwardly manifested we seem to see his presence rather than his workmanship, and the mysterious breath of life, rather than the manipulation of matter.

As, therefore, it appears from all evidence that it is the sense of felicity which we first desire in organic form, it is evident from reason, as demonstrable by experience, that those forms will be the most beautiful (always, observe, leaving typical beauty out of the question) which exhibit most of power, and seem capable of most quick and joyous sensation. Hence we find gradations of beauty from the apparent impenetrableness of hide and slow motion of the elephant and rhinoceros, from the foul occupation of the vulture, from the earthy struggling of the worm, to the brilliancy of the butterfly, the buoyancy of the lark, the swiftness of the fawn and the horse, the fair and kingly sensibility of man.

§ 8. The second perfection of the theoretic faculty as concerned with life is justice of moral judgment.

Thus far then, the theoretic faculty is concerned with the happiness of animals, and its exercise depends on the cultivation of the affections only. Let us next observe how it is concerned with the moral functions of animals, and therefore how it is dependent on the cultivation of every moral sense. There

is not any organic creature, but in its history and habits it shall exemplify or illustrate to us some moral excellence or deficiency, or some point of God's providential government, which it is necessary for us to know. Thus the functions and the fates of animals are distributed to them, with a variety which exhibits to us the dignity and results of almost every passion and kind of conduct, some filthy and slothful, pining and unhappy; some rapacious, restless, and cruel; some ever earnest and laborious, and, I think, unhappy in their endless labor, creatures, like the bee, that heap up riches and cannot tell who shall gather them, and others employed like angels in endless offices of love and praise. Of which when, in right condition of mind, we esteem those most beautiful, whose functions are the most noble, whether as some, in mere energy, or as others, in moral honor, so that we look with hate on the foulness of the sloth, and the subtlety of the adder, and the rage of the hyena: with the honor due to their earthly wisdom we invest the earnest ant and unwearied bee; but we look with full perception of sacred function to the tribes of burning plumage and choral voice.* And so what lesson we might receive for our earthly conduct from the creeping and laborious things, was taught us by that earthly king who made silver to be in Jerusalem as stones (yet thereafter was less rich towards God.) But from the lips of an heavenly King, who had not where to lay his head, we were taught what lesson we have to learn from those higher creatures who sow not, nor reap, nor gather into barns, for their Heavenly Father feedeth them.

§ 9. How impeded.

There is much difficulty in the way of our looking with this rightly balanced judgment on the moral functions of the animal tribes, owing to the independent and often opposing characters of typical beauty, which are among them, as it seems, arbitrarily distributed, so that the most fierce and cruel are often clothed in the liveliest colors, and strengthened by the noblest forms, with this only exception, that so far as I know, there is no high beauty in any slothful animal, but even among those of prey, its characters exist in exalted measure upon those that range and pursue, and are in equal degree withdrawn from those that

* 'Type of the wise—who soar, but never roam,
True to the kindred points of heaven and home."
(WORDSWORTH.—To the Skylark.)

lie subtly and silently in the covert of the reed and fens. But that mind only is fully disciplined in its theoretic power, which can, when it chooses, throwing off the sympathies and repugnancies with which the ideas of destructiveness or of innocence accustom us to regard the animal tribes, as well as those meaner likes and dislikes which arise, I think, from the greater or less resemblance of animal powers to our own, can pursue the pleasures of typical beauty down to the scales of the alligator, the coils of the serpent, and the joints of the beetle; and again, on the other hand, regardless of the impressions of typical beauty, accept from each creature, great or small, the more important lessons taught by its position in creation as sufferer or chastiser, as lowly or having dominion, as of foul habit or lofty aspiration, and from the several perfections which all illustrate or possess, courage, perseverance, industry, or intelligence, or, higher yet, of love and patience, and fidelity and rejoicing, and never wearied praise.

§ 10. The influence of moral signs in expression.

Which moral perfections that they indeed are productive, in proportion to their expression, of instant beauty instinctively felt, is best proved by comparing those parts of animals in which they are definitely expressed, as for instance the eye, of which we shall find those ugliest which have in them no expression nor life whatever, but a corpse-like stare, or an indefinite meaningless glaring, as in some lights, those of owls and cats, and mostly of insects and of all creatures in which the eye seems rather an external, optical instrument than a bodily member through which emotion and virtue of soul may be expressed, (as pre-eminently in the chameleon,) because the seeming want of sensibility and vitality in a living creature is the most painful of all wants. And next to these in ugliness come the eyes that gain vitality indeed, but only by means of the expression of intense malignity, as in the serpent and alligator; and next to these, to whose malignity is added the virtue of subtlety and keenness, as of the lynx and hawk; and then, by diminishing the malignity and increasing the expressions of comprehensiveness and determination, we arrive at those of the lion and eagle, and at last, by destroying malignity altogether, at the fair eye of the herbivorous tribes, wherein the superiority of beauty consists always in the greater or less sweetness and gentleness primarily, as in the gazelle, camel, and ox, and in the greater or less intellect, secon-

darily, as in the horse and dog, and finally, in gentleness and intellect both in man. And again, taking the mouth, another source of expression, we find it ugliest where it has none, as mostly in fish, or perhaps where without gaining much in expression of any kind, it becomes a formidable destructive instrument, as again in the alligator, and then, by some increase of expression, we arrive at birds' beaks, wherein there is more obtained by the different ways of setting on the mandibles than is commonly supposed, (compare the bills of the duck and the eagle,) and thence we reach the finely developed lips of the carnivora, which nevertheless lose that beauty they have, in the actions of snarling and biting, and from these we pass to the nobler because gentler and more sensible, of the horse, camel, and fawn, and so again up to man, only there is less traceableness of the principle in the mouths of the lower animals, because they are in slight measure only capable of expression, and chiefly used as instruments, and that of low function, whereas in man the mouth is given most definitely as a means of expression, beyond and above its lower functions. Compare the remarks of Sir Charles Bell on this subject in his Essay on Expression, and compare the mouth of the negro head given by him (p. 28, third edition) with that of Raffaelle's St. Catherine. I shall illustrate the subject farther hereafter by giving the mouth of one of the demons of Orcagna's Inferno, with projecting incisors, and that of a fish and a swine, in opposition to pure graminivorous and human forms; but at present it is sufficient for my purpose to insist on the single great principle, that, wherever expression is possible, and uninterfered with by characters of typical beauty, which confuse the subject exceedingly as regards the mouth, (for the typical beauty of the carnivorous lips is on a grand scale, while it exists in very low degree in the beaks of birds,) wherever, I say, these considerations do not interfere, the beauty of the animal form is in exact proportion to the amount of moral or intellectual virtue expressed by it; and wherever beauty exists at all, there is some kind of virtue to which it is owing, as the majesty of the lion's eye is owing not to its ferocity, but to its seriousness and seeming intellect, and of the lion's mouth to its strength and sensibility, and not its gnashing of teeth, nor wrinkling in its wrath; and farther be it noted, that of the intellectual or moral virtues, the moral are those which are attended with most

beauty, so that the gentle eye of the gazelle is fairer to look upon than the more keen glance of men, if it be unkind.

§ 11. As also in plants. Of the parallel effects of expression upon plants there is little to be noted, as the mere naming of the subject cannot but bring countless illustrations to the mind of every reader: only this, that, as we saw they were less susceptible of our sympathetic love, owing to the absence in them of capability of enjoyment, so they are less open to the affections based upon the expression of moral virtue, owing to their want of volition; so that even on those of them which are deadly and unkind we look not without pleasure, the more because this their evil operation cannot be by them outwardly expressed, but only by us empirically known; so that of the outward seemings and expressions of plants, there are few but are in some way good and therefore beautiful, as of humility, and modesty, and love of places and things, in the reaching out of their arms, and clasping of their tendrils; and energy of resistance, and patience of suffering, and beneficence one towards another in shade and protection, and to us also in scents and fruits (for of their healing virtues, however important to us, there is no more outward sense nor seeming than of their properties mortal or dangerous.)

§ 12. Recapitulation. Whence, in fine, looking to the whole kingdom of organic nature, we find that our full receiving of its beauty depends first on the sensibility and then on the accuracy and touchstone faithfulness of the heart in its moral judgments, so that it is necessary that we should not only love all creatures well, but esteem them in that order which is according to God's laws and not according to our own human passions and predilections, not looking for swiftness, and strength, and cunning, rather than for patience and kindness, still less delighting in their animosity and cruelty one towards another, neither, if it may be avoided, interfering with the working of nature in any way, nor, when we interfere to obtain service, judging from the morbid conditions of the animal or vegetable so induced; for we see every day the theoretic faculty entirely destroyed in those who are interested in particular animals, by their delight in the results of their own teaching, and by the vain straining of curiosity for new forms such as nature never intended, as the disgusting types for instance, which we see earnestly sought for by the fanciers of rabbits and pigeons.

and constantly in horses, substituting for the true and balanced beauty of the free creature some morbid development of a single power, as of swiftness in the racer, at the expense, in certain measure, of the animal's healthy constitution and fineness of form; and so the delight of horticulturists in the spoiling of plants; so that in all cases we are to beware of such opinions as seem in any way referable to human pride, or even to the grateful or pernicious influence of things upon ourselves, and to cast the mind free, and out of ourselves, humbly, and yet always in that noble position of pause above the other visible creatures, nearer God than they, which we authoritatively hold, thence looking down upon them, and testing the clearness of our moral vision by the extent, and fulness, and constancy of our pleasure in the light of God's love as it embraces them, and the harmony of his holy laws, that forever bring mercy out of rapine, and religion out of wrath.

CHAPTER XIII

OF VITAL BEAUTY.—SECONDLY AS GENERIC.

§ 1. The beauty of fulfilment of appointed function in every animal.

HITHERTO we have observed the conclusions of the theoretic faculty with respect to the relations of happiness, and of more or less exalted function existing between different orders of organic being. But we must pursue the inquiry farther yet, and observe what impressions of beauty are connected with more or less perfect fulfilment of the appointed function by different individuals of the same species. We are now no longer called to pronounce upon worthiness of occupation or dignity of disposition; but both employment and capacity being known, and the animal's position and duty fixed, we have to regard it in that respect alone, comparing it with other individuals of its species, and to determine how far it worthily executes its office; whether, if scorpion, it have poison enough, or if tiger, strength enough, or if dove, innocence enough, to sustain rightly its place in creation, and come up to the perfect idea of dove, tiger, or scorpion.

In the first or sympathetic operation of the theoretic faculty, it will be remembered, we receive pleasure from the signs of mere happiness in living things. In the second theoretic operation of comparing and judging, we constituted ourselves such judges of the lower creatures as Adam was made by God when they were brought to him to be named, and we allowed of beauty in them as they reached, more or less, to that standard of moral perfection by which we test ourselves. But, in the third place, we are to come down again from the judgment seat, and taking it for granted that every creature of God is in some way good, and has a duty and specific operation providentially accessory to the well-being of all, we are to look in this faith to that employment and nature of each, and to derive pleasure from their entire perfection and fitness for the duty they have to do, and in their entire fulfilment of it: and

so we are to take pleasure and find beauty in the magnificent binding together of the jaws of the ichthyosaurus for catching and holding, and in the adaptation of the lion for springing, and of the locust for destroying, and of the lark for singing, and in every creature for the doing of that which God has made it to do. Which faithful pleasure in the perception of the perfect operation of lower creatures I have placed last among the perfections of the theoretic faculty concerning them, because it is commonly last acquired, both owing to the humbleness and trustfulness of heart which it demands, and because it implies a knowledge of the habits and structure of every creature, such as we can but imperfectly possess.

§ 2. The two senses of the word "ideal." Either it refers to action of the imagination,

The perfect *idea* of the form and condition in which all the properties of the species are fully developed, is called the ideal of the species. The question of the nature of ideal conception of species, and of the mode in which the mind arrives at it, has been the subject of so much discussion, and source of so much embarrassment, chiefly owing to that unfortunate distinction between idealism and realism which leads most people to imagine the ideal opposed to the real, and therefore *false*, that I think it necessary to request the reader's most careful attention to the following positions.

Any work of art which represents, not a material object, but the mental conception of a material object, is, in the primary sense of the word ideal; that is to say, it represents an idea, and not a thing. Any work of art which represents or realizes a material object, is, in the primary sense of the term, unideal.

Ideal works of art, therefore, in this first sense, represent the result of an act of imagination, and are good or bad in proportion to the healthy condition and general power of the imagination whose acts they represent.

Unideal works of art (the studious production of which is termed realism) represent actual existing things, and are good or bad in proportion to the perfection of the representation.

All entirely bad works of art may be divided into those which, professing to be imaginative, bear no stamp of imagination, and are therefore false, and those which, professing to be representative of matter, miss of the representation and are therefore nugatory.

It is the habit of most observers to regard art as representative of matter, and to look only for the entireness of representation; and it was to this view of art that I limited the arguments of the former sections of the present work, wherein having to oppose the conclusions of a criticism entirely based upon the realist system, I was compelled to meet that criticism on its own grounds. But the greater part of works of art, more especially those devoted to the expression of ideas of beauty, are the results of the agency of imagination, their worthiness depending, as above stated, on the healthy condition of the imagination.

Hence it is necessary for us, in order to arrive at conclusions respecting the worthiness of such works, to define and examine the nature of the imaginative faculty, and to determine first what are the signs or conditions of its existence at all; and secondly, what are the evidences of its healthy and efficient existence, upon which examination I shall enter in the second section of the present part.

§ 3. Or to perfection of type.

But there is another sense of the word ideal besides this, and it is that with which we are here concerned. It is evident that, so long as we use the word to signify that art which represents ideas and not things, we may use it as truly of the art which represents an idea of Caliban, and not real Caliban, as of the art which represents an idea of Antinous, and not real Antinous. For that is as much imagination which conceives the monster as which conceives the man. If, however, Caliban and Antinous be creatures of the same species, and the form of the one contain not the fully developed types or characters of the species, while the form of the other presents the greater part of them, then the latter is said to be a form more ideal than the other, as a nearer approximation to the general idea or conception of the species.

§ 4. This last sense how inaccurate, yet to be retained.

Now it is evident that this use of the word ideal is much less accurate than the other, from which it is derived, for it rests on the assumption that the assemblage of all the characters of a species in their perfect development cannot exist but in the imagination. For if it can actually and in reality exist, it is not right to call it ideal or imaginary; it would be better to call it characteristic or general, and to re-

serve the word ideal for the results of the operation of the imagination, either on the perfect or imperfect forms.

Nevertheless, the word ideal has been so long and universally accepted in this sense, that I think it better to continue the use of it, so only that the reader will be careful to observe the distinction in the sense, according to the subject matter under discussion. At present then, using it as expressive of the noble generic form which indicates the full perfection of the creature in all its functions, I wish to examine how far this perception exists or may exist in nature, and if not in nature, how it is by us discoverable or imaginable.

§ 5. Of Ideal form. First, in the lower animals.

Now it is better, when we wish to arrive at truth, always to take familiar instances, wherein the mind is not likely to be biassed by any elevated associations or favorite theories. Let us ask therefore, first, what kind of ideal form may be attributed to a limpet or an oyster, that is to say, whether all oysters do or do not come up to the entire notion or idea of an oyster. I apprehend that, although in respect of size, age, and kind of feeding, there may be some difference between them, yet of those which are of full size and healthy condition there will be found many which fulfil the conditions of an oyster in every respect, and that so perfectly, that we could not, by combining the features of two or more together, produce a more perfect oyster than any that we see. I suppose also, that, out of a number of healthy fish, birds, or beasts of the same species, it would not be easy to select an individual as superior to *all* the rest; neither by comparing two or more of the nobler examples together, to arrive at the conception of a form superior to that of either; but that, though the accidents of more abundant food or more fitting habitation may induce among them some varieties of size, strength, and color, yet the entire generic form would be presented by many, neither would any art be able to add to or diminish from it.

§ 6. In what consistent.

It is, therefore, hardly right to use the word ideal of the generic forms of these creatures, of which we see actual examples; but if we are to use it, then be it distinctly understood that their ideality consists in the full development of all the powers and properties of the creature as such, and is inconsistent with accidental or imperfect developments, and even

with great variation from average size, the ideal size being neither gigantic nor diminutive, but the utmost grandeur and entireness of proportion at a certain point above the mean size; for as more individuals always fall short of generic size than rise above it, the generic is above the average or mean size. And this perfection of the creature invariably involves the utmost possible degree of all those properties of beauty, both typical and vital, which it is appointed to possess.

§ 7. Ideal form in vegetables.

Let us next observe the conditions of ideality in vegetables. Out of a large number of primroses or violets, I apprehend that, although one or two might be larger than all the rest, the greater part would be very sufficient primroses and violets. And that we could, by no study nor combination of violets, conceive of a better violet than many in the bed. And so generally of the blossoms and separate members of all vegetables.

But among the entire forms of the complex vegetables, as of oak-trees, for instance, there exists very large and constant difference, some being what we hold to be fine oaks, as in parks, and places where they are taken care of, and have their own way, and some are but poor and mean oaks, which have had no one to take care of them, but have been obliged to maintain themselves.

That which we have to determine is, whether ideality be predicable of the fine oaks only, or whether the poor and mean oaks also may be considered as ideal, that is, coming up to the conditions of oak, and the general notion of oak.

§ 8. The difference of position between plants and animals,

Now there is this difference between the positions held in creation by animals and plants, and thence in the dispositions with which we regard them; that the animals, being for the most part locomotive, are capable both of living where they choose, and of obtaining what food they want, and of fulfilling all the conditions necessary to their health and perfection. For which reason they are answerable for such health and perfection, and we should be displeased and hurt if we did not find it in one individual as well as another.

But the case is evidently different with plants. They are intended fixedly to occupy many places comparatively unfit for them, and to fill up all the spaces where greenness, and coolness, and ornament, and oxygen are wanted, and that with very little

reference to their comfort or convenience. Now it would be hard upon the plant if, after being tied to a particular spot, where it is indeed much wanted, and is a great blessing, but where it has enough to do to live, whence it cannot move to obtain what it wants or likes, but must stretch its unfortunate arms here and there for bare breath and light, and split its way among rocks, and grope for sustenance in unkindly soil; it would be hard upon the plant, I say, if under all these disadvantages, it were made answerable for its appearance, and found fault with because it was not a fine plant of the kind. And so we find it ordained that in order that no unkind comparisons may be drawn between one and another, there are not appointed to plants the fixed number, position, and proportion of members which are ordained in animals, (and any variation from which in these is unpardonable,) but a continually varying number and position, even among the more freely growing examples, admitting therefore all kinds of license to those which have enemies to contend with, and that without in any way detracting from their dignity and perfection.

§ 9. Admits of variety in the ideal of the former.

So then there is in trees no perfect form which can be fixed upon or reasoned out as ideal; but that is always an ideal oak which, however poverty-stricken, or hunger-pinched, or tempest-tortured, is yet seen to have done, under its appointed circumstances, all that could be expected of oak.

The ideal, therefore, of the park oak is that to which I alluded in the conclusion of the former part of this work, full size, united terminal curve, equal and symmetrical range of branches on each side. The ideal of the mountain oak may be anything, twisting, and leaning, and shattered, and rock-encumbered, so only that amidst all its misfortunes, it maintain the dignity of oak; and, indeed, I look upon this kind of tree as more ideal than the other, in so far as by its efforts and struggles, more of its nature, enduring power, patience in waiting for, and ingenuity in obtaining what it wants, is brought out, and so more of the essence of oak exhibited, than under more fortunate conditions.

§ 10. Ideal form in vegetables destroyed by cultivation.

And herein, then, we at last find the cause of that fact which we have twice already noted, that the exalted or seemingly improved condition, whether of plant or animal, induced by human interference, is not the true

and artistical ideal of it.* It has been well shown by Dr. Herbert,† that many plants are found alone on a certain soil or subsoil in a wild state, not because such soil is favorable to them, but because they alone are capable of existing on it, and because all dangerous rivals are by its inhospitality removed. Now if we withdraw the plant from this position, which it hardly endures, and supply it with the earth, and maintain about it the temperature that it delights in; withdrawing from it at the same time all rivals which, in such conditions nature would have thrust upon it, we shall indeed obtain a magnificently developed example of the plant, colossal in size, and splèndid in organization, but we shall utterly lose in it that moral ideal which is dependent on its right fulfilment of its appointed functions. It was intended and created by the Deity for the covering of those lonely spots where no other plant could live; it has been thereto endowed with courage, and strength, and capacities of endurance unequalled; its character and glory are not therefore in the gluttonous and idle feeling of its own over luxuriance, at the expense of other creatures utterly destroyed and rooted out for its good alone, but in its right doing of its hard duty, and forward climbing into those spots of forlorn hope where it alone can bear witness to the kindness and presence of the Spirit that cutteth out rivers among the the rocks, as it covers the valleys with corn: and there, in its vanward place, and only there, where nothing is withdrawn for it, nor hurt by it, and where nothing can take part of its honor, nor usurp its throne, are its strength, and fairness, and price, and goodness in the sight of God, to be truly esteemed.

§ 11. Instance in the Soldanella and Ranunculus.

The first time that I saw the soldanella alpina, before spoken of, it was growing, of magnificent size, on a sunny Alpine pasture, among bleating of sheep and lowing of cattle, associated with a profusion of geum montanum, and ranunculus pyrenæus. I noticed it only because new to me,

* I speak not here of those conditions of vegetation which have especial reference to man, as of seeds and fruits, whose sweetness and farina seem in great measure given, not for the plant's sake, but for his, and to which therefore the interruption in the harmony of creation of which he was the cause is extended; and their sweetness and larger measure of good to be obtained only by his redeeming labor. His curse has fallen on the corn and the vine, and the wild barley misses of its fulness, that he may eat bread by the sweat of his brow.

† Journal of the Horticultural Society. Part I.

nor perceived any peculiar beauty in its cloven flower. Some days after, I found it alone, among the rack of the higher clouds, and howling of glacier winds, and, as I described it, piercing through an edge of avalanche, which in its retiring had left the new ground brown and lifeless, and as if burned by recent fire; the plant was poor and feeble, and seemingly exhausted with its efforts, but it was then that I comprehended its ideal character, and saw its noble function and order of glory among the constellations of the earth.

The ranunculus glacialis might perhaps, by cultivation, be blanched from its wan and corpse-like paleness to purer white, and won to more branched and lofty development of its ragged leaves. But the ideal of the plant is to be found only in the last, loose stones of the moraine, alone there; wet with the cold, unkindly drip of the glacier water, and trembling as the loose and steep dust to which it clings yields ever and anon, and shudders and crumbles away from about its root.

§ 12. The beauty of repose and felicity, how consistent with such ideal.

And if it be asked how this conception of the utmost beauty of ideal form is consistent with what we formerly argued respecting the pleasantness of the appearance of felicity in the creature, let it be observed, and forever held, that the right and true happiness of every creature, is in this very discharge of its function, and in those efforts by which its strength and inherent energy are developed: and that the repose of which we also spoke as necessary to all beauty, is, as was then stated, repose not of inanition, nor of luxury, nor of irresolution, but the repose of magnificent energy and being; in action, the calmness of trust and determination; in rest, the consciousness of duty accomplished and of victory won, and this repose and this felicity can take place as well in the midst of trial and tempest, as beside the waters of comfort; they perish only when the creature is either unfaithful to itself, or is afflicted by circumstances unnatural and malignant to its being, and for the contending with which it was neither fitted nor ordained. Hence that rest which is indeed glorious is of the chamois couched breathless on his granite bed, not of the stalled ox over his fodder, and that happiness which is indeed beautiful is in the bearing of those trial tests which are appointed for the proving of every creature, whether it be good, or whether it be evil;

and in the fulfilment to the uttermost of every command it has received, and the out-carrying to the uttermost of every power and gift it has gotten from its God.

§ 13. The ideality of Art.

Therefore the task of the painter in his pursuit of ideal form is to attain accurate knowledge, so far as may be in his power, of the character, habits, and peculiar virtues and duties of every species of being; down even to the stone, for there is an ideality of stones according to their kind, an ideality of granite and slate and marble, and it is in the utmost and most exalted exhibition of such individual character, order, and use, that all ideality of art consists. The more cautious he is in assigning the right species of moss to its favorite trunk, and the right kind of weed to its necessary stone, in marking the definite and characteristic leaf, blossom, seed, fracture, color, and inward anatomy of everything, the more truly ideal his work becomes. All confusion of species, all careless rendering of character, all unnatural and arbitrary association, is vulgar and unideal in proportion to its degree.

§ 14. How connected with the imaginative faculties.

It is to be noted, however, that nature sometimes in a measure herself conceals these generic differences, and that when she displays them it is commonly on a scale too small for human hand to follow.

The pursuit and seizure of the generic differences in their concealment, and the display of them on a larger and more palpable scale, is one of the wholesome and healthy operations of the imagination of which we are presently to speak.*

Generic differences being commonly exhibited by art in different manner and way from that of their natural occurrence, are in this respect more strictly and truly ideal in art than in reality.

§ 15. Ideality, how belonging to ages and conditions

This only remains to be noted, that, of all creatures whose existence involves birth, progress, and dissolution, ideality is predicable all through their existence, so that they be perfect with reference to their supposed period of being. Thus there is an ideal of infancy, of youth, of old age, of death, and of decay. But when the ideal form of the species is spoken of or conceived in general terms, the form is understood to be of that period when the generic attributes are perfectly developed, and previous to the commencement of their decline. At

* Compare Sect. II. Chap. IV.

which period all the characters of vital and typical beauty are commonly most concentrated in them, though the arrangement and proportion of these characters varies at different periods, youth having more of the vigorous beauty, and age of the reposing; youth of typical outward fairness, and age of expanded and etherealized moral expression; the babe, again, in some measure atoning in gracefulness for its want of strength, so that the balanced glory of the creature continues in solemn interchange, perhaps even

> "Filling more and more with crystal light,
> As pensive evening deepens into night."

Hitherto, however, we have confined ourselves to the examination of ideal form in the lower animals, and we have found that, to arrive at it, no combination of forms nor exertion of fancy is required, but only simple choice among those naturally presented, together with careful investigation and anatomizing of the habits of the creatures. I fear we shall arrive at a very different conclusion, in considering the ideal form of man

CHAPTER XIV.

OF VITAL BEAUTY.—THIRDLY, IN MAN.

§ 1. Condition of the human creature entirely different from that of the lower animals.

HAVING thus passed gradually through all the orders and fields of creation, and traversed that goodly line of God's happy creatures who "leap not, but express a feast, where all the guests sit close, and nothing wants," without finding any deficiency which human invention might supply, nor any harm which human interference might mend, we come at last to set ourselves face to face with ourselves, expecting that in creatures made after the image of God we are to find comeliness and completion more exquisite than in the fowls of the air and the things that pass through the paths of the sea.

But behold now a sudden change from all former experience. No longer among the individuals of the race is there equality or likeness, a distributed fairness and fixed type visible in each, but evil diversity, and terrible stamp of various degradation; features seamed with sickness, dimmed by sensuality, convulsed by passion, pinched by poverty, shadowed by sorrow, branded with remorse; bodies consumed with sloth, broken down by labor, tortured by disease, dishonored in foul uses; intellects without power, hearts without hope, minds earthly and devilish; our bones full of the sin of our youth, the heaven revealing our iniquity, the earth rising up against us, the roots dried up beneath, and the branch cut off above; well for us only, if, after beholding this our natural face in a glass, we desire not straightway to forget what manner of men we be.

§ 2. What room here for idealization.

Herein there is at last something, and too much, for that short stopping intelligence and dull perception of ours to accomplish, whether in earnest fact, or in the seeking for the outward image of beauty:—to undo the devil's work, to restore to the body the grace and the power

which inherited disease has destroyed, to return to the spirit the purity, and to the intellect the grasp that they had in Paradise. Now, first of all, this work, be it observed is in no respect a work of imagination. Wrecked we are, and nearly all to pieces; but that little good by which we are to redeem ourselves is to be got out of the old wreck, beaten about and full of sand though it be; and not out of that desert island of pride on which the devils split first, and we after them: and so the only restoration of the body that we can reach is not to be coined out of our fancies, but to be collected out of such uninjured and bright vestiges of the old seal as we can find and set together, and so the ideal of the features, as the good and perfect soul is seen in them, is not to be reached by imagination, but by the seeing and reaching forth of the better part of the soul to that of which it must first know the sweetness and goodness in itself, before it can much desire, or rightly find, the signs of it in others.

I say much desire and rightly find, because there is not any soul so sunk but that it shall in some measure feel the impression of mental beauty in the human features, and detest in others its own likeness, and in itself despise that which of itself it has made.

§ 8. How the conception of the bodily ideal is reached.

Now, of the ordinary process by which the realization of ideal bodily form is reached, there is explanation enough in all treatises on art, and it is so far well comprehended that I need not stay long to consider it. So far as the sight and knowledge of the human form, of the purest race, exercised from infancy constantly, but not excessively in all exercises of dignity, not in twists and straining dexterities, but in natural exercises of running, casting, or riding; practised in endurance, not of extraordinary hardship, for that hardens and degrades the body, but of natural hardship, vicissitudes of winter and summer, and cold and heat, yet in a climate where none of these are severe; surrounded also by a certain degree of right luxury, so as to soften and refine the forms of strength; so far as the sight of all this could render the mental intelligence of what is right in human form so acute as to be able to abstract and combine from the best examples so produced, that which was most perfect in each, so far the Greek conceived and attained the ideal of bodily form: and on the Greek modes of attaining

it, as well as on what he produced, as a perfect example of it, chiefly dwell those writers whose opinions on this subject I have collected; wholly losing sight of what seems to me the most important branch of the inquiry, namely, the influence for good or evil of the mind upon the bodily shape, the wreck of the mind itself, and the modes by which we may conceive of its restoration.

§ 4. Modifications of the bodily ideal owing to influence of mind. First, of intellect.

Now, the operation of the mind upon the body, and evidence of it thereon, may be considered under the following three general heads.

First, the operation of the intellectual powers upon the features, in the fine cutting and chiselling of them, and removal from them of signs of sensuality and sloth, by which they are blunted and deadened, and substitution of energy and intensity for vacancy and insipidity, (by which wants alone the faces of many fair women are utterly spoiled and rendered valueless,) and by the keenness given to the eye and fine moulding and development to the brow, of which effects Sir Charles Bell has well noted the desirableness and opposition to brutal types, (p. 59, third edition;) only this he has not sufficiently observed, that there are certain virtues of the intellect in measure inconsistent with each other, as perhaps great subtlety with great comprehensiveness, and high analytical with high imaginative power, or that at least, if consistent and compatible, their signs upon the features are not the same, so that the outward form cannot express both, without in a measure expressing neither; and so there are certain separate virtues of the outward form correspondent with the more constant employment or more prevailing capacity of the brain, as the piercing keenness, or open and reflective comprehensiveness of the eye and forehead, and that all these virtues of form are ideal, only those the most so which are the signs of the worthiest powers of intellect, though which these be, we will not at present stay to inquire.

§ 5. Secondly, of the moral feelings.

The second point to be considered in the influence of mind upon body, is the mode of operation and conjunction of the moral feelings on and with the intellectual powers, and then their conjoint influence on the bodily form. Now, the operation of the right moral feelings on the intellect is always for the good of the latter, for it is not possible

that selfishness should reason rightly in any respect, but must be blind in its estimation of the worthiness of all things; neither anger, for that overpowers the reason or outcries it, neither sensuality, for that overgrows and chokes it, neither agitation, for that has no time to compare things together, neither enmity, for that must be unjust, neither fear, for that exaggerates all things, neither cunning and deceit, for that which is voluntarily untrue will soon be unwittingly so: but the great reasoners are self-command, and trust unagitated, and deep-looking Love, and Faith, which as she is above Reason, so she best holds the reins of it from her high seat: so that they err grossly who think of the right development even of the intellectual type as possible, unless we look to higher sources of beauty first. Nevertheless, though in their operation *upon* them the moral feelings are thus elevatory of the mental faculties, yet in their conjunction *with* them they seem to occupy, in their own fulness, such room as to absorb and overshadow all else, so that the simultaneous exercise of both is in a sort impossible; for which cause we occasionally find the moral part in full development and action, without corresponding expanding of the intellect (though never without healthy condition of it,) as in that of Wordsworth,

> "In such high hour
> Of visitation from the Living God,
> Thought was not;"

only I think that if we look far enough, we shall find that it is not intelligence itself, but the immediate act and effort of a laborious, struggling, and imperfect intellectual faculty, with which high moral emotion is inconsistent; and that though we cannot, while we feel deeply, reason shrewdly, yet I doubt if, *except* when we feel deeply, we can ever comprehend fully; so that it is only the climbing and mole-like piercing, and not the sitting upon their central throne, nor emergence into light, of the intellectual faculties which the full heart feeling allows not. Hence, therefore, in the indications of the countenance, they are only the hard cut lines, and rigid settings, and wasted hollows, that speak of past effort and painfulness of mental application, which are inconsistent with expression of moral feeling, for all these are of infelicitous augury, but not the full and serene development of habitual command in

the look, and solemn thought in the brow, only these, in their unison with the signs of emotion, become softened and gradually confounded with a serenity and authority of nobler origin. But of the sweetness which that higher serenity (of happiness,) and the dignity which that higher authority (of Divine law, and not human reason,) can and must stamp on the features, it would be futile to speak here at length, for I suppose that both are acknowledged on all hands, and that there is not any beauty but theirs to which men pay long obedience: at all events, if not by sympathy discovered, it is not in words explicable with what divine lines and lights the exercise of godliness and charity will mould and gild the hardest and coldest countenance, neither to what darkness their departure will consign the loveliest. For there is not any virtue the exercise of which, even momentarily, will not impress a new fairness upon the features, neither on them only, but on the whole body, both the intelligence and the moral faculties have operation, for even all the movement and gestures, however slight, are different in their modes according to the mind that governs them, and on the gentleness and decision of just feeling there follows a grace of action, and through continuance of this a grace of form, which by no discipline may be taught or attained.

§ 6. What beauty is bestowed by them.

The third point to be considered with respect to the corporeal expression of mental character is, that there is a certain period of the soul culture when it begins to interfere with some of the characters of typical beauty belonging to the bodily frame, the stirring of the intellect wearing down the flesh, and the moral enthusiasm burning its way out to heaven, through the emaciation of the earthen vessel; and that there is, in this indication of subduing of the mortal by the immortal part, an ideal glory of perhaps a purer and higher range than that of the more perfect material form. We conceive, I think, more nobly of the weak presence of Paul, than of the fair and ruddy countenance of Daniel.

§ 7. How the soul culture interferes harmfully with the bodily ideal.

Now, be it observed that in our consideration of these three directions of mental influence, we have several times been compelled to stop short of definite conclusions owing to the apparent inconsistency of certain excellences and beauties to which they tend, as, first, of

§ 8. The inconsistency among the effects of the mental virtues on the form.

different kinds of intellect with each other; and secondly, of the moral faculties with the intellectual, (and if we had separately examined the moral emotions, we should have found certain inconsistencies among them also,) and again of the soul culture generally with the bodily perfections. Such inconsistencies we should find in the perfections of no other animal. The strength or swiftness of the dog are not inconsistent with his sagacity, nor is bodily labor in the ant or bee destructive of their acuteness of instinct. And this peculiarity of relation among the perfections of man is no result of his fall or sinfulness, but an evidence of his greater nobility, and of the goodness of God towards him. For the individuals of each race of lower animals, being not intended to hold among each other those relations of charity which are the privilege of humanity, are not adapted to each other's assistance, admiration, or support, by differences of power and function. But the love of the human race is increased by their individual differences, and the unity of the creature, as before we saw of all unity, made perfect by each having something to bestow and to receive, bound to the rest by a thousand various necessities and various gratitudes, humility in each rejoicing to admire in his fellow that which he finds not in himself, and each being in some respect the complement of his race. Therefore, in investigating the signs of the ideal or perfect type of humanity, we must not presume on the singleness of that type, and yet, on the other hand, we must cautiously distinguish between differences conceivably existing in a perfect state, and differences resulting from immediate and present operation of the Adamite curse. Of which the former are differences that bind, and the latter that separate. For although we can suppose the ideal or perfect human heart, and the perfect human intelligence, equally adapted to receive every right sensation and pursue every order of truth, yet as it is appointed for some to be in authority and others in obedience, some in solitary functions and others in relative ones, some to receive and others to give, some to teach and some to discover; and as all these varieties of office are not only conceivable as existing in a perfect state of man, but seem almost to be implied by it, and at any rate cannot be done away with but by a total change of his constitution and dependencies, of which the imagination can take no hold; so there are habits

§ 9. Is a sign of God's kind purpose towards the race.

and capacities of expression induced by these various offices, which admit of many separate ideals of equal perfection, according to the functions of the creatures, so that there is an ideal of authority, of judgment, of affection, of reason, and of faith; neither can any combination of these ideals be attained, not that the just judge is to be supposed incapable of affection, nor the king incapable of obedience, but as it is impossible that any essence short of the Divine should at the same instant be equally receptive of all emotions, those emotions which, by right and order, have the most usual victory, both leave the stamp of their habitual presence on the body, and render the individual more and more susceptible of them in proportion to the frequency of their prevalent recurrence; added to which causes of distinctive character are to be taken into account the differences of age and sex, which, though seemingly of more finite influence, cannot be banished from any human conception. David, ruddy and of a fair countenance, with the brook stone of deliverance in his hand, is not more ideal than David leaning on the old age of Barzillai, returning chastened to his kingly home. And they who are as the angels of God in heaven, yet cannot be conceived as so assimilated that their different experiences and affections upon earth shall then be forgotten and effectless: the child taken early to his place cannot be imagined to wear there such a body, nor to have such thoughts, as the glorified apostle who has finished his course and kept the faith on earth. And so whatever perfections and likeness of love we may attribute to either the tried or the crowned creatures, there is the difference of the stars in glory among them yet; differences of original gifts, though not of occupying till their Lord come, different dispensations of trial and of trust, of sorrow and support, both in their own inward, variable hearts, and in their positions of exposure or of peace, of the gourd shadow and the smiting sun, of calling at heat of day or eleventh hour, of the house unroofed by faith, and the clouds opened by revelation: differences in warning, in mercies, in sicknesses, in signs, in time of calling to account; like only they all are by that which is not of them, but the gift of God's unchangeable mercy. "I will give unto this last even as unto thee."

§ 10. Consequent separation and difference of ideals.

Hence, then, be it observed, that what we must determinedly banish from the human form and coun-

§ 11. The *effects* of the Adamite curse are to be

tenance in our seeking of its ideal, is not everything which can be ultimately traced to the Adamite fall for its cause, but only the immediate operation and presence of the degrading power of sin. For there is not any part of our feeling or nature, nor can there be through eternity, which shall not be in some way influenced and affected by the fall, and that not in any way of degradation, for the renewing in the divinity of Christ is a nobler condition than ever that of Paradise, and yet throughout eternity it must imply and refer to the disobedience, and the corrupt state of sin and death, and the suffering of Christ himself, which can we conceive of any redeemed soul as for an instant forgetting, or as remembering without sorrow? Neither are the alternations of joy and such sorrow as by us is inconceivable, being only as it were a softness and silence in the pulse of an infinite felicity, inconsistent with the state even of the unfallen, for the angels who rejoice over repentance cannot but feel an uncomprehended pain as they try and try again in vain, whether they may not warm hard hearts with the brooding of their kind wings. So that we have not to banish from the ideal countenance the evidences of sorrow, nor of past suffering, nor even of past and conquered sin, but only the immediate operation of any evil, or the immediate coldness and hollowness of any good emotion. And hence in that contest before noted, between the body and the soul, we may often have to indicate the body as far conquered and outworn, and with signs of hard struggle and bitter pain upon it, and yet without ever diminishing the purity of its ideal; and because it is not in the power of any human imagination to reason out or conceive the countless modifications of experience, suffering, and separated feeling, which have modelled and written their indelible images in various order upon every human countenance, so no right ideal can be reached by any combination of feature nor by any moulding and melting of individual beauties together, and still less without model or example conceived; but there is a perfect ideal to be wrought out of *every* face around us that has on its forehead the writing and the seal of the angel ascending from the East,* by the earnest study and penetration of the written history thereupon, and the banishing of the blots and stains, where-

distinguished from signs of its immediate activity.

§ 12. Which latter only are to be banished from ideal form.

* Rev. vii. 2.

in we still see in all that is human, the visible and instant operation of unconquered sin.

§ 13. Ideal form is only to be obtained by portraiture.

Now I see not how any of the steps of the argument by which we have arrived at this conclusion can be evaded, and yet it would be difficult to state anything more directly opposite to the usual teaching and practice of artists. It is usual to hear portraiture opposed to the pursuit of ideality, and yet we find that no face can be ideal which is not a portrait. Of this general principle, however, there are certain modifications which we must presently state; let us first, however, pursue it a little farther, and deduce its practical consequences.

These are, first, that the pursuit of idealism in humanity, as of idealism in lower nature, can be successful only when followed through the most constant, patient, and humble rendering of actual models, accompanied with that earnest mental as well as ocular study of each, which can interpret all that is written upon it, disentangle the hieroglyphics of its sacred history, rend the veil of the bodily temple, and rightly measure the relations of good and evil contending within it for mastery,* that everything done without such study must be shallow and contemptible, that generalization or combination of individual character will end less in the mending than the losing of it, and, except in certain instances of which we shall presently take note, is valueless and vapid, even if it escape being painful from its want of truth, which in these days it often in some measure does, for we indeed find faces about us with want enough of life or wholesome character in them to justify anything. And that habit of the old and great painters of introducing portrait into all their highest works, I look to, not as error in them, but as the very source and root of their superiority in all things, for they were too great and too humble not to see in every face about them that which was above them, and which no fancies of theirs could match nor take place of, wherefore we find the custom of portraiture constant with them, both portraiture of study and for purposes of analysis, as with Leonardo; and actual, professed, serviceable, hardworking portraiture of the men of their time, as with Raffaelle, and Titian, and Tintoret; and por-

§ 14. Instances among the greater of the Ideal Masters.

* Compare Part II. Sec. I. Chap. III § 6.

traiture of Love, as with Fra Bartolomeo of Savonarola, and Simon Memmi of Petrarch, and Giotto of Dante, and Gentile Bellini of a beloved imagination of Dandolo, and with Raffaelle constantly; and portraiture in real downright necessity of models, even in their noblest works, as was the practice of Ghirlandajo perpetually, and Masaccio and Raffaelle, and manifestly of the men of highest and purest ideal purpose, as again, Giotto, and in his characteristic monkish heads, Angelico, and John Bellini, (note especially the St. Christopher at the side of that mighty picture of St. Jerome, at Venice,) and so of all: which practice had indeed a perilous tendency for men of debased mind, who used models such as and where they ought not, as Lippi and the corrupted Raffaelle; and is found often at exceeding disadvantage among men who looked not at their models with intellectual or loving penetration, but took the outside of them, or perhaps took the evil and left the good, as Titian in that academy study at Venice which is called a St. John, and all workers whatsoever that I know of, after Raffaelle's time, as Guido and the Caracci, and such others: but it is nevertheless the necessary and sterling basis of all ideal art, neither has any great man ever been able to do without it, nor dreamed of doing without it even to the close of his days.

§ 15. Evil results of opposite practice in modern times.

And therefore there is not any greater sign of the utter want of vitality and hopefulness in the schools of the present day than that unhappy prettiness and sameness under which they mask, or rather for which they barter, in their lentile thirst, all the birthright and power of nature, which prettiness, wrought out and spun fine in the study, out of empty heads, till it hardly betters the blocks on which dresses and hair are tried in barbers' windows and milliners' books, cannot but be revolting to any man who has his eyes, even in a measure, open to the divinity of the immortal seal on the common features that he meets in the highways and hedges hourly and momentarily, outreaching all efforts of conception as all power of realization, were it Raffaelle's three times over, even when the glory of the wedding garment is not there.

§ 16. The right use of the model.

So far, then, of the use of the model and the preciousness of it in all art, from the highest to the lowest. But the use of the model is not all. It

must be used in a certain way, and on this choice of right or wrong way all our ends are at stake, for the art, which is of no power without the model, is of pernicious and evil power if the model be wrongly used. What the right use is, has been at least established, if not fully explained, in the argument by which we arrived at the general principle.

The right ideal is to be reached, we have asserted, only by the banishment of the immediate signs of sin upon the countenance and body. How, therefore, are the signs of sin to be known and separated?

No intellectual operation is here of any avail. There is not any reasoning by which the evidences of depravity are to be traced in movements of muscle or forms of feature; there is not any knowledge, nor experience, nor diligence of comparison that can be of avail. Here, as throughout the operation of the theoretic faculty, the perception is altogether moral, an instinctive love and clinging to the lines of light. Nothing but love can read the letters, nothing but sympathy catch the sound, there is no pure passion that can be understood or painted except by pureness of heart; the foul or blunt feeling will see itself in everything, and set down blasphemies; it will see Beelzebub in the casting out of devils, it will find its god of flies in every alabaster box of precious ointment. The indignation of zeal towards God (nemesis) it will take for anger against man, faith and veneration it will miss of, as not comprehending, charity it will turn into lust, compassion into pride, every virtue it will go over against, like Shimei, casting dust. But the right Christian mind will in like manner find its own image wherever it exists, it will seek for what it loves, and draw it out of all dens and caves, and it will believe in its being, often when it cannot see it, and always turn away its eyes from beholding vanity; and so it will lie lovingly over all the faults and rough places of the human heart, as the snow from heaven does over the hard, and black, and broken mountain rocks, following their forms truly, and yet catching light for them to make them fair, and that must be a steep and unkindly crag indeed which it cannot cover.

§ 17. Ideal form to be reached only by love.

Now of this spirit there will always be little enough in the world, and it cannot be given nor

§ 18. Practical principles deducible.

taught by men, and so it is of little use to insist on it farther, only I may note some practical points respecting the ideal treatment of human form, which may be of use in these thoughtless days. There is not the face, I have said, which the painter may not make ideal if he choose, but that subtile feeling which shall find out all of good that there is in any given countenance is not, except by concern for other things than art, to be acquired. But certain broad indications of evil there are which the bluntest feeling may perceive, and which the habit of distinguishing and casting out would both ennoble the schools of art, and lead in time to greater acuteness of perception with respect to the less explicable characters of soul beauty.

§ 19. Expressions chiefly destructive of ideal character. 1st. Pride.

Those signs of evil which are commonly most manifest on the human features are roughly divisible into these four kinds, the signs of pride, of sensuality, of fear, and of cruelty. Any one of which will destroy the ideal character of the countenance and body.

Now of these, the first, pride, is perhaps the most destructive of all the four, seeing it is the undermost and original story of all sin; and it is base also from the necessary foolishness of it, because at its best, that is when grounded on a just estimation of our own elevation or superiority above certain others, it cannot but imply that our eyes look downward only, and have never been raised above our own measure, for there is not the man so lofty in his standing nor capacity but he must be humble in thinking of the cloud habitation and far sight of the angelic intelligences above him, and in perceiving what infinity there is of things he cannot know nor even reach unto, as it stands compared with that little body of things he can reach, and of which nevertheless he can altogether understand not one; not to speak of that wicked and fond attributing of such excellency as he may have to himself, and thinking of it as his own getting, which is the real essence and criminality of pride, nor of those viler forms of it, founded on false estimation of things beneath us and irrational contemning of them: but taken at its best, it is still base to that degree that there is no grandeur of feature which it cannot destroy and make despicable, so that the first step towards the ennobling of any face is the ridding it of its vanity; to which aim there can-

§ 20. Portraiture ancient and modern.

not be anything more contrary than that principle of portraiture which prevails with us in these days, whose end seems to be the expression of vanity throughout, in face and in all circumstances of accompaniment, tending constantly to insolence of attitude, and levity and haughtiness of expression, and worked out farther in mean accompaniments of worldly splendor and possession, together with hints or proclamations of what the person has done or supposes himself to have done, which, if known, it is gratuitous in the portrait to exhibit, and if unknown, it is insolent in the portrait to proclaim; whence has arisen such a school of portraiture as must make the people of the nineteenth century the shame of their descendants, and the butt of all time. To which practices are to be opposed both the glorious severity of Holbein, and the mighty and simple modesty of Raffaelle, Titian, Giorgione, and Tintoret, with whom armor does not constitute the warrior, neither silk the dame. And from what feeling the dignity of that protraiture arose is best traceable at Venice, where we find their victorious doges painted neither in the toil of battle nor the triumph of return, nor set forth with thrones and curtains of state, but kneeling always crownless, and returning thanks to God for his help, or as priests, interceding for the nation in its affliction. Which feeling and its results have been so well traced out by Rio,* that I need not speak of it farther.

§ 21. Secondly, Sensuality.

That second destroyer of ideal form, the appearance of sensual character, though not less fatal in its operation on modern art, is more difficult to trace, owing to its peculiar subtlety. For it is not possible to say by what minute differences the right conception of the human form is separated from that which is luscious and foul: for the root of all is in the love and seeking of the painter, who, if of impure and feeble mind, will cover all that he touches with clay staining, as Bandinelli puts a foul scent of human flesh about his marble Christ, and as many whom I will not here name, among moderns; but if of mighty mind or pure, may pass through all places of foulness, and none will stay upon him, as Michael Angelo, or he will baptize all things and wash them with pure water, as our own Stothard. Now, so far as this power is dependent on the seeking of the ar

* De la Poesie Chretienne. Forme de l'Art. Chap. VIII.

tist, and is only to be seen in the work of good and spiritually-minded men, it is vain to attempt to teach or illustrate it, neither is it here the place to take note of the way in which it belongs to the representation of the mental image of things, instead of things themselves, of which we are to speak in treating of the imagination; but thus much may here be noted of broad, practical principle, that the purity of flesh painting depends in very considerable measure on the intensity and warmth of its color. For if it be opaque, and clay cold, and colorless, and devoid of all the radiance and value of flesh, the lines of its true beauty, being severe and firm, will become so hard in the loss of the glow and gradation by which nature illustrates them, that the painter will be compelled to sacrifice them for a luscious fulness and roundness, in order to give the conception of flesh; which, being done, destroys ideality of form as of color, and gives all over to lasciviousness of surface; showing also that the painter sought for this, and this only, since otherwise he had not taken a subject in which he knew himself compelled to surrender all sources of dignity. Whereas, right splendor of color both bears out a nobler severity of form, and is in itself purifying and cleansing, like fire, furnishing also to the painter an excuse for the choice of his subject, seeing that he may be supposed as not having painted it but in the admiration of its abstract glory of color and form, and with no unworthy seeking. But the mere power of perfect and glowing color will in some sort redeem even a debased tendency of mind itself, as eminently the case with Titian, who, though of little feeling, and often treating base subjects, or elevated subjects basely, as in the disgusting Magdalen of the Pitti palace, and that of the Barberigo at Venice, yet redeems all by his glory of hue, so that he cannot paint altogether coarsely; and with Giorgione, who had nobler and more serious intellect, the sense of nudity is utterly lost, and there is no need nor desire of concealment any more, but his naked figures move among the trees like fiery pillars, and lie on the grass like flakes of sunshine.* With the religious painters on the other hand, such nudity as they were compelled to treat is redeemed as much by severity of form and hardness of line as by color, so that generally

§ 22. How connected with impurity of color.

§ 23. And prevented by its splendor.

§ 24. Or by severity of drawing.

* As in the noble Louvre picture.

their draped figures are preferable, as in the Francia of our own gallery. But these, with Michael Angelo and the Venetians, except Titian, form a great group, pure in sight and aim, between which and all other schools by which the nude has been treated, there is a gulf fixed, and all the rest, compared with them, seem striving how best to illustrate that of Spenser.

> "Of all God's works, which doe this worlde adorn,
> There is no one more faire, and excellent
> Than is man's body both for power and forme
> Whiles it is kept in sober government.
> But none than it more foul and indecent
> Distempered through misrule and passions bace."

§ 25. Degrees of descent in this respect: Rubens, Correggio, and Guido.

Of these last, however, with whom ideality is lost, there are some worthier than others, according to that measure of color they reach, and power they possess, whence much may be forgiven to Rubens, (as to our own Etty,) less, as I think, to Correggio, who with less apparent and evident coarseness has more of inherent sensuality, wrought out with attractive and luscious refinement, and that alike in all subjects, as in the Madonna of the Incoronazione, over the high altar of San Giovanni at Parma, of which the head and upper portion of the figure, now preserved in the library, might serve as a model of attitude and expression to a ballet figurante:* and again in the lascivious St. Catherine of the Giorno, and in the Charioted Diana, (both at Parma,) not to name any of his works of aim more definitely evil. Beneath which again will fall the works devoid alike of art and decency, as that Susannah of Guido, in our own gallery, and so we may descend to the absolute clay of the moderns, only noticing in all how much of what is evil and base in subject or tendency, is redeemed by what is pure and right in hue, so that I do not assert that the purpose and object of many of the grander painters of the nude, as Titian for instance, was always elevated, but only that we, who cannot paint the lamp of fire within the earthen pitcher, must take other weapons in our left hands. And it is to be noted, also, that in climates where the body can be more openly

§ 26. And modern art.

* The Madonna turns her back to Christ, and bends her head over her shoulder to receive the crown, the arms being folded with studied grace over the bosom.

and frequently visited by sun and weather, the nude both comes to be regarded in a way more grand and pure, as necessarily awakening no ideas of base kind, (as pre-eminently with the Greeks,) and also from that exposure receives a firmness and sunny elasticity very different from the silky softness of the clothed nations of the north, where every model necessarily looks as if accidentally undressed; and hence from the very fear and doubt with which we approach the nude, it becomes expressive of evil, and for that daring frankness of the old men, which seldom missed of human grandeur, even when it failed of holy feeling, we have substituted a mean, carpeted, gauze-veiled, mincing sensuality of curls and crisping pins, out of which I believe nothing can come but moral enervation and mental paralysis.

§ 27. Thirdly, ferocity and fear. The latter how to be distinguished from awe

Respecting those two other vices of the human face, the expressions of fear and ferocity, there is less to be noted, as they only occasionally enter into the conception of character; only it is most necessary to make careful distinction between the conception of power, destructiveness, or majesty, in matter, influence, or agent, and the actual fear of any of these, for it is possible to conceive of terribleness, without being in a position obnoxious to the danger of it, and so without fear, and the feeling arising from this contemplation of dreadfulness, ourselves being in safety, as of a stormy sea from the shore, is properly termed awe, and is a most noble passion; whereas fear, mortal and extreme, may be felt respecting things ignoble, as the falling from a window, and without any conception of terribleness or majesty in the thing, or the accident dreaded; and even when fear is felt respecting things sublime, as thunder, or storm of battle, yet the tendency of it is to destroy all power of contemplation of their majesty, and to freeze and shrink all the intellect into a shaking heap of clay, for absolute acute fear is of the same unworthiness and contempt from whatever source it arise, and degrades the mind and the outward bearing of the body alike, even though it be among hail of heaven and fire running along the ground. And so among the children of God, while there is always that fearful and bowed apprehension of his majesty, and that sacred dread of all offence to him, which is called the fear of God, yet of real and essential fear there is not any but clinging of confidence to him, as their Rock,

§ 28. Holy fear, how distinct from human terror.

Fortress and Deliverer, and perfect love, and casting out of fear, so that it is not possible that while the mind is rightly bent on him, there should be dread of anything either earthly or supernatural, and the more dreadful seems the height of his majesty, the less fear they feel that dwell in the shadow of it, ("Of whom shall I be afraid?") so that they are as David was, devoted to his fear; whereas, on the other hand, those who, if they may help it, never conceive of God, but thrust away all thought and memory of him, and in his real terribleness and omnipresence fear him not nor know him, yet are of real, acute, piercing, and ignoble fear, haunted for evermore; fear inconceiving and desperate that calls to the rocks, and hides in the dust; and hence the peculiar baseness of the expression of terror, a baseness attributed to it in all times, and among all nations, as of a passion atheistical, brutal, and profane. So also, it is always joined with ferocity, which is of all passions the least human; for of sensual desires there is license to men, as necessity; and of vanity there is intellectual cause, so that when seen in a brute it is pleasant, and a sign of good wit; and of fear there is at times necessity and excuse, as being allowed for prevention of harm; but of ferocity there is no excuse nor palliation, but it is pure essence of tiger and demon, and it casts on the human face the paleness alike of the horse of Death, and the ashes of hell.

§ 29. Ferocity is joined always with fear. Its unpardonableness.

Wherefore, of all subjects that can be admitted to sight, the expressions of fear and ferocity are the most foul and detestable, and so there is in them I know not what sympathetic attractiveness for minds cowardly and base, as the vulgar of most nations, and forasmuch as they are easily rendered by men who can render nothing else, they are often trusted in by the herd of painters incapable and profane, as in that monstrous abortion of the first room of the Louvre, called the Deluge, whose subject is pure, acute, mortal fear; and so generally the senseless horrors of the modern French schools, spawn of the guillotine: also there is not a greater test of grandeur or meanness of mind than the expressions it will seek for and develop in the features and forms of men in fierce strife, whether determination and devotion, and all the other attributes of that unselfishness which constitutes heroism, as in the warrior

§ 30. Such expressions how sought by painters powerless and impious.

of Agasias; and distress not agitated nor unworthy, though mortal, as in the Dying Gladiator, or brutal ferocity and butchered agony, of which the lowest and least palliated examples are those battles of Salvator Rosa, which none but a man, base-born and thief-bred, could have dwelt upon for an instant without sickening, of which I will only name that example in the Pitti palace, wherein the chief figure in the foreground is a man with his arm cut off at the shoulder, run through the other hand into the breast with a lance.* And manifold instances of the same feeling are to be found in the repainting of the various representations of the Inferno, so common through Italy, more especially that of Orcagna's in the Campo Santo, wherein the few figures near the top that yet remain untouched are grand in their severe drawing and expressions of enduring despair, while those below, repainted by Solazzino, depend for their expressiveness upon torrents of blood; so in the Inferno of Santa Maria Novella, and of the Arena chapel, not to speak of the horrible images of the Passion, by which vulgar Romanism has always striven to excite the languid sympathies of its untaught flocks. Of which foulness let us reason no farther, the very image and memory of them being pollution, only noticing this, that there has always been a morbid tendency in Romanism towards the contemplation of bodily pain, owing to the attribution of saving power to it, which, like every other moral error, has been of fatal effect in art, leaving not altogether without the stain and blame of it, even the highest of the pure Romanist painters; as Fra Angelico, for instance, who, in his Passion subjects, always insists weakly on the bodily torture, and is unsparing of blood; and Giotto, though his treatment is usually grander, as in that Crucifixion over the door of the Convent of St. Marks, where the blood is hardly actual, but issues from the feet in a typical and conventional form, and becomes a crimson cord which is twined strangely beneath about a skull; only that which these holy men did to enhance, even though in their means mistaken, the impression and power of the sufferings of Christ, or of his saints, is

* Compare Michelet, (Du Prêtre, de la Femme, de la Famille,) Chap. III. note. He uses language too violent to be quoted; but excuses Salvator by reference to the savage character of the Thirty Years' War. That this excuse has no validity may be proved by comparing the painter's treatment of other subjects. See Sec. II. Chap. III. § 19, note.

always in a measure noble, and to be distinguished with all reverence from the abominations of the irreligious painters following, as of Camillo Procaccini, in one of his martyrdoms in the Gallery of the Brera, at Milan, and other such, whose names may be well spared to the reader.

§ 31. Of passion generally.

These, then, are the four passions whose presence in any degree on the human face is degradation. But of all passion it is to be generally observed, that it becomes ignoble either when entertained respecting unworthy objects, and therefore shallow or unjustifiable, or when of impious violence, and so destructive of human dignity. Thus grief is noble or the reverse, according to the dignity and worthiness of the object lamented, and the grandeur of the mind enduring it. The sorrow of mortified vanity or avarice is simply disgusting, even that of bereaved affection may be base if selfish and unrestrained. All grief that convulses the features is ignoble, because it is commonly shallow and certainly temporary, as in children, though in the shock and shiver of a strong man's features under sudden and violent grief there may be something of sublime. The grief of Guercino's Hagar, in the Brera gallery at Milan, is partly despicable, partly disgusting, partly ridiculous; it is not the grief of the injured Egyptian, driven forth into the desert with the destiny of a nation in her heart, but of a servant of all work, turned away for stealing tea and sugar. Common painters forget that passion is not absolutely and in itself great or violent, but only in proportion to the weakness of the mind it has to deal with; and that in exaggerating its outward signs, they are not exalting the passion, but evaporating the hero.* They think too much of passions as always the same in their nature, forgetting that the love of Achilles is different from the love of Paris, and of Alcestis from that of Laodamia. The use and value of passion is not as a subject in contemplation in itself, but as it breaks up the fountains of the great deep of the human mind, or displays its mightiness and ribbed majesty, as mountains are seen in their stability best among the coil of clouds; whence, in fine, I think it is to be held that all

§ 32. It is never to be for itself exhibited—at least on the face

* "The fire, that mounts the liquor, till it run o'er
In seeming to augment it, wastes it."

HENRY VIII.

passion which attains overwhelming power, so that it is not as resisting, but as conquered, that the creature is contemplated, is unfit for high art, and destructive of the ideal character of the countenance: and in this respect, I cannot but hold Raffaelle to have erred in his endeavor to express passion of such acuteness in the human face; as in the fragment of the Massacre of the Innocents in our own gallery, (wherein, repainted though it be, I suppose the purpose of the master is yet to be understood,) for if such subjects are to be represented at all, their entire expression may be given without degrading the face, as we shall presently see done with unspeakable power by Tintoret,* and I think that all subjects of the kind, all human misery, slaughter, famine, plague, peril, and crime, are better in the main avoided, as of unprofitable and hardening influence, unless so far as out of the suffering, hinted rather than expressed, we may raise into nobler relief the eternal enduring of fortitude and affection, of mercy and self-devotion, or when, as by the threshing-floor of Ornan, and by the cave of Lazarus, the angel of the Lord is to be seen in the chastisement, and his love to be manifested to the despair of men.

§ 33. Recapitulation.

Thus, then, we have in some sort enumerated those evil signs which are most necessary to be shunned in the seeking of ideal beauty,† though it is not the knowledge of them, but the dread and hatred of them, which will effectually aid the painter; as on the other hand it is not by mere admission of the loveliness of good and holy expression that its subtile characters are to be traced. Raffaelle himself, questioned on this subject, made doubtful answer; he probably could not trace through what early teaching, or by what dies of emotion the image had been sealed upon his heart. Our own Bacon, who well saw the impossibility of reaching it by the combination of many separate beauties, yet explains not the nature of that "kind of felicity" to which he attributes success. I suppose those who have conceived

* Sect. II. Chap. III. § 22.

† Let it be observed that it is always of beauty, not of human character in its lower and criminal modifications, that we have been speaking. That variety of character, therefore, which we have affirmed to be necessary, is the variety of Giotto and Angelico, not of Hogarth. Works concerned with the exhibition of general character, are to be spoken of in the consideration of Ideas of Relation.

and wrought the loveliest things, have done so by no theorizing, but in simple labor of love, and could not, if put to a bar of rationalism, defend all points of what they had done, but painted it in their own delight, and to the delight of all besides, only always with that respect of conscience and "fear of swerving from that which is right, which maketh diligent observers of circumstances the loose regard whereof is the nurse of vulgar folly, no less than Solomon's attention thereunto was of natural furtherances the most effectual to make him eminent above others, for he gave good heed, and pierced everything to the very ground."*

With which good heed, and watching of the instants when men feel warmly and rightly, as the Indians do for the diamond in their washing of sand, and that with the desire and hope of finding true good in men, and not with the ready vanity that sets itself to fiction instantly, and carries its potter's wheel about with it always, (off which there will come only clay vessels of regular shape after all,) instead of the pure mirror that can show the seraph standing by the human body—standing as signal to the heavenly land:† with this heed and this charity, there are none of us that may not bring down that lamp upon his path of which Spenser sang:—

"That beauty is not, as fond men misdeem
An outward show of things, that only seem;
But that fair lamp, from whose celestial ray
That light proceeds, which kindleth lover's fire,
Shall never be extinguished nor decay.
But when the vital spirits do expire,
Unto her native planet shall retire,
For it is heavenly born and cannot die,
Being a parcel of the purest sky."

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* Hooker, Book V. Chap. I. § 2.

† "Each corse lay flat, lifeless and flat,
And by the holy rood,
A man all light, a seraph man
By every corse there stood.
This seraph band, each waved his hand,
It was a heavenly sight;
They stood as signals to the land,
Each one a lovely light."

ANCIENT MARINER

CHAPTER XV.

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS RESPECTING THE THEORETIC FACULTY.

§ 1 There are no sources of the emotion of beauty more than those found in things visible.

Of the sources of beauty open to us in the visible world, we have now obtained a view which, though most feeble in its grasp and scanty in its detail, is yet general in its range. Of no other sources than these visible can we, by any effort in our present condition of existence, conceive. For what revelations have been made to humanity inspired, or caught up to heaven of things to the heavenly region belonging, have been either by unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter, or else by their very nature incommunicable, except in types and shadows; and ineffable by words belonging to earth, for of things different from the visible, words appropriated to the visible can convey no image. How different from earthly gold that clear pavement of the city might have seemed to the eyes of St. John, we of unreceived sight cannot know; neither of that strange jasper and sardine can we conceive the likeness which he assumed that sat on the throne above the crystal sea; neither what seeming that was of slaying that the Root of David bore in the midst of the elders; neither what change it was upon the form of the fourth of them that walked in the furnace of Dura, that even the wrath of idolatry knew for the likeness of the Son of God. The knowing that is here permitted to us is either of things outward only, as in those it is whose eyes faith never opened, or else of that dark part that her glass shows feebly, of things supernatural, that gleaming of the Divine form among the mortal crowd, which all may catch if they will climb the sycamore and wait; nor how much of God's abiding at the house may be granted to those that so seek, and how much more may be opened to them in the breaking of bread, cannot be said; but of that only we can reason which is in a measure revealed to all, of that which is by constancy and purity of affection to be

found in the things and the beings around us upon earth. Now among all those things whose beauty we have hitherto examined, there has been a measure of imperfection. Either inferiority of kind, as the beauty of the lower animals, or resulting from degradation, as in man himself; and although in considering the beauty of human form, we arrived at some conception of restoration, yet we found that even the restoration must be in some respect imperfect, as incapable of embracing all qualities, moral and intellectual, at once, neither to be freed from all signs of former evil done or suffered. Consummate beauty, therefore, is not to be found on earth, though often such intense measure of it as shall drown all capacity of receiving; neither is it to be respecting humanity legitimately conceived. But by certain operations of the imagination upon ideas of beauty received from things around us, it is possible to conceive respecting superhuman creatures (of that which is more than creature, no creature ever conceived) a beauty in some sort greater than we see. Of this beauty, however, it is impossible to determine anything until we have traced the imaginative operations to which it owes its being, of which operations this much may be prematurely said, that they are not creative, that no new ideas are elicited by them, and that their whole function is only a certain dealing with, concentrating or mode of regarding the impressions received from external things, that therefore, in the beauty to which they will conduct us, there will be found no new element, but only a peculiar combination or phase of those elements that we now know, and that therefore we may at present draw all the conclusions with respect to the rank of the theoretic faculty, which the knowledge of its subject matter can warrant.

§ 2. What imperfection exists in visible things. How in a sort by imagination removable.

§ 3. Which however affects not our present conclusions.

We have seen that this subject matter is referable to four general heads. It is either the record of science, printed in things external, or it is a symbolizing of Divine attributes in matter, or it is the felicity of living things, or the perfect fulfilment of their duties and functions. In all cases it is something Divine, either the approving voice of God, the glorious symbol of him, the evidence of his kind presence, or the obedience to his will by him induced and supported.

§ 4. The four sources from which the pleasure of beauty is derived are all divine.

All these subjects of contemplation are such as we may suppose will remain sources of pleasure to the perfected spirit throughout eternity. Divine in their nature, they are addressed to the immortal part of men.

§ 5. What objections may be made to this conclusion.

There remain, however, two points to be noticed before I can hope that this conclusion will be frankly accepted by the reader. If it be the moral part of us to which beauty addresses itself, how does it happen, it will be asked, that it is ever found in the works of impious men, and how is it possible for such to desire or conceive it?

On the other hand, how does it happen that men in high state of moral culture are often insensible to the influence of material beauty, and insist feebly upon it as an instrument of soul culture.

These two objections I shall endeavor briefly to answer, not that they can be satisfactorily treated without that detailed examination of the whole body of great works of art, on which I purpose to enter in the following volume. For the right determination of these two questions is indeed the whole end and aim of my labor, (and if it could be here accomplished, I should bestow no effort farther,) namely, the proving that no supreme power of art can be attained by impious men; and that the neglect of art, as an interpreter of divine things, has been of evil consequence to the Christian world.

At present, however, I would only meet such objections as must immediately arise in the reader's mind.

§ 6. Typical beauty may be æsthetically pursued. Instances.

And first, it will be remembered that I have, throughout the examination of typical beauty, asserted its instinctive power, the moral meaning of it being only discoverable by faithful thought. Now this instinctive sense of it varies in intensity among men, being given, like the hearing ear of music, to some more than to others: and if those to whom it is given in large measure be unfortunately men of impious or unreflecting spirit, it is very possible that the perceptions of beauty should be by them cultivated on principles merely æsthetic, and so lose their hallowing power; for though the good seed in them is altogether divine, yet, there being no blessing in the springing thereof, it brings forth wild grapes in the end. And yet these wild grapes are well discernible, like the deadly gourds of Gilgal. There is in all works of

such men a taint and stain, and jarring discord, blacker and louder exactly in proportion to the moral deficiency, of which the best proof and measure is to be found in their treatment of the human form, (since in landscape it is nearly impossible to introduce definite expression of evil,) of which the highest beauty has been attained only once, and then by no system taught painter, but by a most holy Dominican monk of Fiesole; and beneath him all stoop lower and lower in proportion to their inferior sanctity, though with more or less attainment of that which is noble, according to their intellectual power and earnestness, as Raffaelle in his St. Cecilia, (a mere study of a passionate, dark-eyed, large formed Italian model,) and even Perugino, in that there is about his noblest faces a shortcoming, indefinable; an absence of the full out-pouring of the sacred spirit that there is in Angelico; traceable, I doubt not, to some deficiencies and avaricious flaws of his heart, whose consequences in his conduct were such as to give Vasari hope that his lies might stick to him (for the contradiction of which in the main, if there be not contradiction enough in every line that the hand of Perugino drew, compare Rio, de la Poësie Chrétienne, and note also what Rio has singularly missed observing, that Perugino, in his portrait of himself in the Florence gallery, has put a scroll into the hand, with the words "Timete Deum," thus surely indicating that which he considered his duty and message:) and so all other even of the sacred painters, not to speak of the lower body of men in whom, on the one hand, there is marked sensuality and impurity in all that they seek of beauty, as in Correggio and Guido, or, on the other, a want in measure of the sense of beauty itself, as in Rubens and Titian, showing itself in the adoption of coarse types of feature and form; sometimes also (of which I could find instances in modern times,) in a want of evidence of delight in what they do; so that, after they have rendered some passage of exceeding beauty, they will suffer some discordant point to interfere with it, and it will not hurt them, as if they had no pleasure in that which was best, but had done it in inspiration that was not profitable to them, as deaf men might touch an instrument with a feeling in their heart, which yet returns not outwardly upon them, and so know not when they play false: and sometimes by total want of choice, for there is a choice of love

§. 7. How interrupted by false feeling.

in all rightly tempered men, not that ignorant and insolent choice which rejects half nature as empty of the right, but that pure choice that fetches the right out of everything; and where this is wanting, we may see men walking up and down in dry places, finding no rest, ever and anon doing something noble, and yet not following it up, but dwelling the next instant on something impure or profitless with the same intensity and yet impatience, so that they are ever wondered at and never sympathized with, and while they dazzle all, they lead none; and then, beneath these again, we find others on whose works there are definite signs of evil mind, ill-repressed, and then inability to avoid, and at last perpetual seeking for and feeding upon horror and ugliness, and filthiness of sin, as eminently in Salvator and Caravaggio, and the lower Dutch schools, only in these last less painfully as they lose the villanous in the brutal, and the horror of crime in its idiocy.

§ 8. Greatness and truth are sometimes by the Deity sustained and spoken in and through evil men.

But secondly, it is to be noted that it is neither by us uncertainable what moments of pure feeling or aspiration may occur to men of minds apparently cold and lost, nor by us to be pronounced through what instruments, and in what strangely occurrent voices, God may choose to communicate good to men. It seems to me that much of what is great, and to all men beneficial, has been wrought by those who neither intended nor knew the good they did, and that many mighty harmonies have been discoursed by instruments that had been dumb or discordant, but that God knew their stops. The Spirit of Prophecy consisted with the avarice of Balaam, and the disobedience of Saul. Could we spare from its page that parable, which he said, who saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open, though we know that the sword of his punishment was then sharp in its sheath beneath him in the plains of Moab? or shall we not lament with David over the shield cast away on the Gilboa mountains, of him to whom God gave *another heart* that day, when he turned his back to go from Samuel? It is not our part to look hardly, nor to look always, to the character or the deeds of men, but to accept from all of them, and to hold fast that which we can prove good, and feel to be ordained for us. We know that whatever good there is in them is itself divine, and wherever we see the virtue of ardent labor and self-surrendering

to a single purpose, wherever we find constant reference made to the written scripture of natural beauty, this at least we know is great and good, this we know is not granted by the counsel of God, without purpose, nor maintained without result: Their interpretation we may accept, into their labor we may enter, but they themselves must look to it, if what they do has no intent of good, nor any reference to the Giver of all gifts. Selfish in their industry, unchastened in their wills, ungrateful for the Spirit that is upon them, they may yet be helmed by that Spirit whithersoever the Governor listeth; involuntary instruments they may become of others' good; unwillingly they may bless Israel, doubtingly discomfit Amalek, but shortcoming there will be of their glory, and sure, of their punishment.

I believe I shall be able, incidentally, in succeeding investigations, to prove this shortcoming, and to examine the sources of it, not absolutely indeed, (seeing that all reasoning on the characters of men must be treacherous, our knowledge on this head being as corrupt as it is scanty, while even in living with them it is impossible to trace the working, or estimate the errors of great and self-secreted minds,) but at least enough to establish the general principle upon such grounds of fact as may satisfy those who demand the practical proof (often in a measure impossible) of things which can hardly be doubted in their rational consequence. At present, it would be useless to enter on an examination for which we have no materials; and I proceed, therefore, to notice that other and opposite error of Christian men in thinking that there is little use or value in the operation of the theoretic faculty, not that I at present either feel myself capable, or that this is the place for the discussion of that vast question of the operation of taste (as it is called) on the minds of men, and the national value of its teaching, but I wish shortly to reply to that objection which might be urged to the real moral dignity of the faculty, that many Christian men seem to be in themselves without it, and even to discountenance it in others.

§ 9. The second objection arising from the coldness of Christian men to external beauty.

It has been said by Schiller, in his letters on æsthetic culture, that the sense of beauty never farthered the performance of a single duty.

Although this gross and inconceivable falsity will hardly be

accepted by any one in so many terms, seeing that there are few so utterly lost but that they receive, and know that they receive, at certain moments, strength of some kind, or rebuke from the appealings of outward things; and that it is not possible for a Christian man to walk across so much as a rood of the natural earth, with mind unagitated and rightly poised, without receiving strength and hope from some stone, flower, leaf, or sound, nor without a sense of a dew falling upon him out of the sky; though, I say, this falsity is not wholly and in terms admitted, yet it seems to be partly and practically so in much of the doing and teaching even of holy men, who in the recommending of the love of God to us, refer but seldom to those things in which it is most abundantly and immediately shown; though they insist much on his giving of bread, and raiment, and health, (which he gives to all inferior creatures,) they require us not to thank him for that glory of his works which he has permitted us alone to perceive: they tell us often to meditate in the closet, but they send us not, like Isaac, into the fields at even, they dwell on the duty of self-denial, but they exhibit not the duty of delight. Now there are reasons for this, manifold, in the toil and warfare of an earnest mind, which, in its efforts at the raising of men from utter loss and misery, has often but little time or disposition to take heed of anything more than the bare life, and of those so occupied it is not for us to judge; but I think, that, of the weaknesses, distresses, vanities, schisms, and sins, which often even in the holiest men, diminish their usefulness, and mar their happiness, there would be fewer if, in their struggle with nature fallen, they sought for more aid from nature undestroyed. It seems to me that the real sources of bluntness in the feelings towards the splendor of the grass and glory of the flower, are less to be found in ardor of occupation, in seriousness of compassion, or heavenliness of desire, than in the turning of the eye at intervals of rest too selfishly within; the want of power to shake off the anxieties of actual and near interest, and to leave results in God's hands; the scorn of all that does not seem immediately apt for our purposes, or open to our understanding, and perhaps something of pride, which desires rather to investigate than to feel. I believe that the root of almost every schism and heresy from which the Christian church

§ 10. Reasons for this coldness in the anxieties of the world. These anxieties overwrought and criminal.

§ 11. Evil consequences of such coldness

has ever suffered, has been the effort of men to earn, rather than to receive, their salvation; and that the reason that preaching is so commonly ineffectual is, that it calls on men oftener to work for God, than to behold God working for them. If, for every rebuke that we utter of men's vices, we put forth a claim upon their hearts; if for every assertion of God's demands from them, we could substitute a display of his kindness to them; if side by side with every warning of death, we could exhibit proofs and promises of immortality; if, in fine, instead of assuming the being of an awful Deity, which men, though they cannot and dare not deny, are always unwilling, sometimes unable, to conceive, we were to show them a near, visible, inevitable, but all beneficent Deity, whose presence makes the earth itself a heaven, I think there would be fewer deaf children sitting in the market-place. At all events, whatever may be the inability in this present life to mingle the full enjoyment of the Divine works with the full discharge of every practical duty, and confessedly in many cases this must be, let us not attribute the inconsistency to any indignity of the faculty of contemplation, but to the sin and the suffering of the fallen state, and the change of order from the keeping of the garden to the tilling of the ground. We cannot say how far it is right or agreeable with God's will, while men are perishing round about us, while grief, and pain, and wrath, and impiety, and death, and all the powers of the air, are working wildly and evermore, and the cry of blood going up to heaven, that any of us should take hand from the plough; but this we know, that there will come a time when the service of God shall be the beholding of him; and though in these stormy seas, where we are now driven up and down, his Spirit is dimly seen on the face of the waters, and we are left to cast anchors out of the stern, and wish for the day, that day will come, when, with the evangelists on the crystal and stable sea, all the creatures of God shall be full of eyes within, and there shall be "no more curse, but his servants shall serve him, and shall see his face."

§ 12. Theoria the service of Heaven.

SECTION II.

OF THE IMAGINATIVE FACULTY.

CHAPTER I.

OF THE THREE FORMS OF IMAGINATION.

§ 1. A partial examination only of the imagination is to be attempted.

We have hitherto been exclusively occupied with those sources of pleasure which exist in the external creation, and which in any faithful copy of it must to a certain extent exist also.

These sources of beauty, however, are not presented by any very great work of art in a form of pure transcript. They invariably receive the reflection of the mind under whose shadow they have passed, and are modified or colored by its image.

This modification is the Work of Imagination.

As, in the course of our succeeding investigation, we shall be called upon constantly to compare sources of beauty existing in nature with the images of them presented by the human mind, it is very necessary for us shortly to review the conditions and limits of the imaginative faculty, and to ascertain by what tests we may distinguish its sane, healthy, and profitable operation, from that which is erratic, diseased, and dangerous.

It is neither desirable nor possible here to examine or illustrate in full the essence of this mighty faculty. Such an examination would require a review of the whole field of literature, and would alone demand a volume. Our present task is not to explain or exhibit full portraiture of this function of the mind in all its relations but only to obtain some certain tests by which we may

determine whether it be very imagination or no, and unmask all impersonations of it, and this chiefly with respect to art, for in literature the faculty takes a thousand forms, according to the matter it has to treat, and becomes like the princess of the Arabian tale, sword, eagle, or fire, according to the war it wages, sometimes piercing, sometimes soaring, sometimes illumining, retaining no image of itself, except its supernatural power, so that I shall content myself with tracing that particular form of it, and unveiling those imitations of it only, which are to be found, or feared, in painting, referring to other creations of mind only for illustration.

§ 2. The works of the metaphysicians how nugatory with respect to this faculty.

Unfortunately, the works of metaphysicians will afford us in this most interesting inquiry no aid whatsoever. They who are constantly endeavoring to fathom and explain the essence of the faculties of mind, are sure in the end to lose sight of all that cannot be explained, (though it may be defined and felt,) and because, as I shall presently show, the essence of the imaginative faculty is utterly mysterious and inexplicable, and to be recognized in its results only, or in the negative results of its absence, the metaphysicians, as far as I am acquainted with their works, miss it altogether, and never reach higher than a definition of fancy by a false name.

What I understand by fancy will presently appear, not that I contend for nomenclature, but only for distinction between two mental faculties, by whatever name they be called, one the source of all that is great in the poetic arts; the other merely decorative and entertaining, but which are often confounded together, and which have so much in common as to render strict definition of either difficult.

§ 3. The definition of D. Stewart, how inadequate.

Dugald Stewart's meagre definition may serve us for a starting point. "Imagination," he says, "includes conception or simple apprehension, which enables us to form a notion of those former objects of perception or of knowledge, out of which we are to make a selection; abstraction, which separates the selected materials from the qualities and circumstances which are connected with them in nature; and judgment or taste, which selects the materials and directs their combination. To these powers we may add that particular habit

of association to which I formerly gave the name of fancy, as it is this which presents to our choice all the different materials which are subservient to the efforts of imagination, and which may therefore be considered as forming the ground-work of poetical genius."

(By fancy in this passage, we find on referring to the chapter treating of it, that nothing more is meant than the rapid occurrence of ideas of sense to the mind.)

Now, in this definition, the very point and purpose of all the inquiry is missed. We are told that judgment or taste "directs the combination." In order that anything may be directed, an end must be previously determined: What is the faculty that determines this end? and of what frame and make, how boned and fleshed, how conceived or seen, is the end itself? Bare judgment, or taste, cannot approve of what has no existence; and yet by Dugald Stewart's definition we are left to their catering among a host of conceptions, to produce a combination which, as they work for, they must see and approve before it exists. This power of prophecy is the very essence of the whole matter, and it is just that inexplicable part which the metaphysician misses.

§ 4. This instance nugatory.

As might be expected from his misunderstanding of the faculty, he has given an instance entirely nugatory.* It would be difficult to find in Milton a passage in which less power of imagination was shown, than the description of Eden, if, as I suppose, this be the passage meant, at the beginning of the fourth book, in which I can find three expressions only in which this power is shown, the "*burnished* with

* He continues thus, "To illustrate these observations, let us consider the steps by which Milton must have proceeded, in creating his imaginary garden of Eden. When he first proposed to himself that subject of description it is reasonable to suppose that a variety of the most striking scenes which h had seen, crowded into his mind. The association of ideas suggested them and the power of conception placed each of them before him with all its beau ties and imperfections. In every natural scene, if we destine it for any particular purpose, there are defects and redundancies, which art may sometimes, but cannot always correct. But the power of imagination is unlimited. She can create and annihilate, and dispose at pleasure her woods, her rocks, and her rivers. Milton, accordingly, would not copy his Eden from any one scene, but would select from each the features which were most eminently beautiful. The power of abstraction enabled him to make the separation, and taste directed him in the selection."

golden rind, hung amiable" of the Hesperian fruit, the "*lays forth* her purple grape" of the vine and the "*fringed* bank with myrtle crowned," of the lake, and these are not what Stewart meant but only that accumulation of bowers, groves, lawns, and hillocks, which is not imagination at all, but composition, and that of the commonest kind. Hence, if we take any passage in which there is real imagination, we shall find Stewart's hypothesis not only inefficient and obscure, but utterly inapplicable.

§ 5. Various instances.

Take one or two at random.

> "On the other side,
> Incensed with indignation, Satan stood
> Unterrified, and like a comet burned
> That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge
> In the arctic sky, and from his horrid hair
> Shakes pestilence and war."

(Note that the word incensed is to be taken in its literal and material sense, set on fire.) What taste or judgment was it that directed this combination? or is there nothing more than taste or judgment here?

> "Ten paces huge
> He back recoiled; the tenth on bended knee
> His massy spear upstaid, as if on earth
> Winds under ground, or waters forcing way
> *Sidelong had pushed a mountain from his seat*
> *Half-sunk with all his pines.*

> "Together both ere the high lawns appeared
> *Under the opening eyelids* of the morn,
> We drove a field, and both together heard
> What time the gray-fly winds her *sultry* horn.

> "Missing thee, I walk unseen
> On the dry smooth shaven green,
> To behold the wandering moon
> Riding near her highest noon,
> *Like one that had been led astray,*
> Through the heavens' wide pathless way,
> And oft *as if her head she bowed*
> Stooping through a fleecy cloud."

It is evident that Stewart's explanation utterly fails in all these instances, for there is in them no "combination" whatsoever, but

a particular mode of regarding the qualities or appearances of a single thing, illustrated and conveyed to us by the image of another; and the act of imagination, observe, is not the selection of this image, but the mode of regarding the object.

But the metaphysician's definition fails yet more utterly, when we look at the imagination neither as regarding, nor combining, but as penetrating.

> "My gracious Silence, Hail!
> Wouldst thou have laughed, had I come coffin'd home
> That weep'st to see me triumph. Ah! my dear,
> Such eyes the widows in Corioli wear,
> And mothers that lack sons."

How did Shakspeare *know* that Virgilia could not speak?

This knowledge, this intuitive and penetrative perception, is still one of the forms, the highest, of imagination, but there is no combination of images here.

§ 6. The three operations of the imagination. Penetrative, associative, contemplative.

We find, then, that the imagination has three totally distinct functions. It combines, and by combination creates new forms; but the secret principle of this combination has not been shown by the analysts. Again, it treats, or regards, both the simple images and its own combinations in peculiar ways; and, thirdly, it penetrates, analyzes, and reaches truths by no other faculty discoverable. These its three functions, I shall endeavor to illustrate, but not in this order: the most logical mode of treatment would be to follow the order in which commonly the mind works; that is, penetrating first, combining next, and treating or regarding, finally; but this arrangement would be inconvenient, because the acts of penetration and of regard are so closely connected, and so like in their relations to other mental acts, that I wish to examine them consecutively, and the rather, because they have to do with higher subject matter than the mere act of combination, whose distinctive nature, that property which makes it imagination and not composition, it will I think be best to explain at setting out, as we easily may, in subjects familiar and material. I shall therefore examine the imaginative faculty in these three forms; first, as combining or associative; secondly, as analytic or penetrative; thirdly, as regardant or contemplative.

CHAPTER II.

OF IMAGINATION ASSOCIATIVE.

§ 1. Of simple conception.

In order to render our inquiry as easy as possible, we shall consider the dealing of the associative imagination with the simplest possible matter, that is,—with conceptions of material things. First, therefore, we must define the nature of these conceptions themselves.

After beholding and examining any material object, our knowledge respecting it exists in two different forms. Some facts exist in the brain in a verbal form, as known, but not conceived, as, for instance, that it was heavy or light, that it was eight inches and a quarter long, etc., of which length we cannot have accurate conception, but only such a conception as might attach to a length of seven inches or nine; and which fact we may recollect without any conception of the object at all. Other facts respecting it exist in the brain in a visible form, not always visible, but voluntarily visible, as its being white, or having such and such a complicated shape, as the form of a rose-bud for instance, which it would be difficult to express verbally, neither is it retained by the brain in a verbal form, but a visible one, that is, when we wish for knowledge of its form for immediate use, we summon up a vision or image of the thing; we do not remember it in words, as we remember the fact that it took so many days to blow, or that it was gathered at such and such a time.

The knowledge of things retained in this visible form is called conception by the metaphysicians, which term I shall retain; it is inaccurately called imagination by Taylor, in the passage quoted by Wordsworth in the preface to his poems, not but that the term imagination is etymologically and rightly expressive of it, but we want that term for a higher faculty.

§ 2. How connected with verbal knowledge.

There are many questions respecting this faculty of conception of very great interest, such as the exact amount of aid that verbal knowledge renders so vis-

ible, (as, for instance, the verbal knowledge that a flower has five, or seven, or ten petals, or that a muscle is inserted at such and such a point of the bone, aids the conception of the flower or the limb;) and again, what amount of aid the visible knowledge renders to the verbal, as for instance, whether any one, being asked a question about some animal or thing, which instantly and from verbal knowledge he cannot answer, may have such power of summoning up the image of the animal or thing as to ascertain the fact, by actual beholding, (which I do not assert, but can conceive to be possible;) and again, what is that indefinite and subtile character of the conception itself in most men, which admits not of being by themselves traced or realized, and yet is a sure test of likeness in any representation of the thing; like an intaglio, with a front light on it, whose lines cannot be seen, and yet they will fit one definite form only, and that accurately; these and many other questions it is irrelevant at present to determine,* since to forward our present purpose, it will be well to suppose the conception, aided by verbal knowledge, to be absolutely perfect, and we will suppose a man to retain such clear image of a large number of the material things he has seen, as to be able to set down any of them on paper with perfect fidelity and absolute memory† of their most minute features.

In thus setting them down on paper, he works, I suppose, exactly as he would work from nature, only copying the remembered image in his mind, instead of the real thing. He is, therefore, still nothing more than a copyist. There is no exercise of imagination in this whatsoever.

§ 3. How used in composition.

But over these images, vivid and distinct as nature herself, he has a command which over nature he has not. He can summon any that he chooses, and if, therefore, any group of them which he received from nature be not altogether to his mind, he is at liberty to remove some of the component images, add others foreign, and re-arrange the whole.

Let us suppose, for instance, that he has perfect knowledge of the forms of the Aiguilles Verte and Argentière, and of the great

* Compare Chapter IV. of this Section.

† On the distinction rightly made by the metaphysicians between conception absolute, and conception accompanied by reference to past time, (or memory,) it is of no necessity here to insist.

glacier between them at the upper extremity of the valley of Chamonix. The forms of the mountains please him, but the presence of the glacier suits not his purpose. He removes the glacier, sets the mountains farther apart, and introduces between them part of the valley of the Rhone.

This is composition, and is what Dugald Stewart mistook for imagination, in the kingdom of which noble faculty it has no part nor lot.

§ 4. Characteristics of composition.

The essential characters of composition, properly so called, are these. The mind which desires the new feature summons up before it those images which it supposes to be of the kind wanted, of these it takes the one which it supposes to be fittest, and tries it: if it will not answer, it tries another, until it has obtained such an association as pleases it.

In this operation, if it be of little sensibility, it regards only the absolute beauty or value of the images brought before it; and takes that or those which it thinks fairest or most interesting, without any regard to their sympathy with those for whose company they are destined. Of this kind is all vulgar composition; the "Mulino" of Claude, described in the preface to the first part, being a characteristic example.

If the mind be of higher feeling, it will look to the sympathy or contrast of the features, to their likeness or dissimilarity; it will take, as it thinks best, features resembling or discordant, and if when it has put them together, it be not satisfied, it will repeat the process on the features themselves, cutting away one part and putting in another, so working more and more delicately down to the lowest details, until by dint of experiment, of repeated trials and shiftings, and constant reference to principles, (as that two lines must not mimic one another, that one mass must not be equal to another,) etc., it has morticed together a satisfactory result.

§ 5. What powers are implied by it. The first of the three functions of fancy.

This process will be more and more rapid and effective, in proportion to the artist's powers of conception and association, these in their turn depending on his knowledge and experience. The distinctness of his powers of conception will give value, point, and truth to every fragment that he draws from memory. His powers of asso-

ciation, and his knowledge of nature will pour out before him in greater or less number and appositeness the images from which to choose. His experience guides him to quick discernment in the combination, when made, of the parts that are offensive and require change.

The most elevated power of mind of all these, is that of association, by which images apposite or resemblant, or of whatever kind wanted, are called up quickly and in multitudes. When this power is very brilliant, it is called fancy, not that this is the only meaning of the word fancy, but it is the meaning of it in relation to that function of the imagination which we are here considering; for fancy has three functions, one subordinate to each of the three functions of the imagination.

Great differences of power are manifested among artists in this respect, some having hosts of distinct images always at their command, and rapidly discerning resemblance or contrast; others having few images, and obscure, at their disposal, nor readily governing those they have.

Where the powers of fancy are very brilliant, the picture becomes highly interesting; if her images are systematically and rightly combined, and truthfully rendered, it will become even impressive and instructive; if wittily and curiously combined, it will be captivating and entertaining.

§ 6. Imagination not yet manifested.

But all this time the imagination has not once shown itself. All this (except the gift of fancy) may be taught, all this is easily comprehended and analyzed; but imagination is neither to be taught, nor by any efforts to be attained, nor by any acuteness of discernment dissected or analyzed.

We have seen that in composition the mind can only take cognizance of likeness or dissimilarity, or of abstract beauty among the ideas it brings together. But neither likeness nor dissimilarity secures harmony. We saw in the chapter on unity that likeness destroyed harmony or unity of membership, and that difference did not necessarily secure it, but only that particular imperfection in each of the harmonizing parts which can only be supplied by its fellow part. If, therefore, the combination made is to be harmonious, the artist must induce in each of its component parts (suppose two only, for simplicity's sake,) such imperfection as

that the other shall put it right. If one of them be perfect by itself, the other will be an excrescence. Both must be faulty when separate, and each corrected by the presence of the other. If he can accomplish this, the result will be beautiful; it will be a whole, an organized body with dependent members;—he is an inventor. If not, let his separate features be as beautiful, as apposite, or as resemblant as they may, they form no whole. They are two members glued together. He is only a carpenter and joiner.

§ 7. Imagination is the co-relative conception of imperfect component parts.

Now, the conceivable imperfections of any single feature are infinite. It is impossible, therefore, to fix upon a form of imperfection in the one, and try with this all the forms of imperfection of the other until one fits; but the two imperfections must be co-relatively and simultaneously conceived.

This is imagination, properly so called, imagination associative, the grandest mechanical power that the human intelligence possesses, and one which will appear more and more marvellous the longer we consider it. By its operation, two ideas are chosen out of an infinite mass, (for it evidently matters not whether the imperfections be conceived out of the infinite number conceivable, or selected out of a number recollected,) two ideas which are separately wrong, which together shall be right, and of whose unity, therefore, the idea must be formed at the instant they are seized, as it is only in that unity that either are good, and therefore only the *conception of that unity can prompt the preference.* Now, what is that prophetic action of mind, which, out of an infinite mass of things that cannot be tried together, seizes, at the same instant two that are fit for each other, together right; yet each disagreeable alone.

§ 8. Material analogy with imagination.

This operation of mind, so far as I can see, is absolutely inexplicable, but there is something like it in chemistry.

"The action of sulphuric acid on metallic zinc affords an instance of what was once called disposing affinity. Zinc decomposes pure water at common temperatures with extreme slowness; but as soon as sulphuric acid is added, decomposition of the water takes place rapidly, though the acid merely unites with oxide of zinc. The former explanation was, that the affinity

of the acid for oxide of zinc disposed the metal to unite with oxygen, and thus enabled it to decompose water; that is, the oxide of zinc was supposed to produce an effect previous to its existence. The obscurity of this explanation arises from regarding changes as consecutive, which are in reality simultaneous. There is no succession in the process, the oxide of zinc is not formed previously to its combination with the acid, but at the same instant. There is, as it were, but one chemical change, which consists in the combination at one and the same moment of zinc with oxygen, and of oxide of zinc with the acid; and this change occurs because these two affinities, acting together, overcome the attraction of oxygen and hydrogen for one another."*

Now, if the imaginative artist will permit us, with all deference, to represent his combining intelligence under the figure of sulphuric acid; and if we suppose the fragment of zinc to be embarrassed among infinitely numerous fragments of diverse metals, and the oxygen dispersed and mingled among gases countless and indistinguishable, we shall have an excellent type in material things of the action of the imagination on the immaterial. Both actions are, I think, inexplicable, for however simultaneous the chemical changes may be, yet the causing power is the affinity of the acid for what has no existence. It is neither to be explained how that affinity operates on atoms uncombined, nor how the artist's desire for an unconceived whole prompts him to the selection of necessary divisions.

§ 9. The grasp and dignity of imagination.

Now, this operation would be wonderful enough, if it were concerned with two ideas only. But a powerfully imaginative mind seizes and combines at the same instant, not only two, but all the important ideas of its poem or picture, and while it works with any one of them, it is at the same instant working with and modifying all in their relations to it, never losing sight of their bearings on each other; as the motion of a snake's body goes through all parts at once, and its volition acts at the same instant in coils that go contrary ways.

This faculty is indeed something that looks as if man were made after the image of God. It is inconceivable, admirable, altogether divine; and yet wonderful as it may seem, it is palpa-

* Elements of Chemistry by the late Edward Turner, M.D. Part II. Sec IV.

bly evident that no less an operation is necessary for the production of any great work, for, by the definition of unity of membership, (the essential characteristic of greatness,) not only certain couples or groups of parts, but *all* the parts of a noble work must be separately imperfect; each must imply, and ask for all the rest, and the glory of every one of them must consist in its relation to the rest, neither while so much as one is wanting can any be right. And it is evidently impossible to conceive in each separate feature, a certain want or wrongness which can only be corrected by the other features of the picture, (not by one or two merely, but by all,) unless together with the want, we conceive also of what is wanted, that is of all the rest of the work or picture. Hence Fuseli:—

"Second thoughts are admissible in painting and poetry only as dressers of the first conception; no great idea was ever formed in fragments."

"He alone can conceive and compose who sees the whole at once before him."

§ 10. Its limits. There is, however, a limit to the power of all human imagination. When the relations to be observed are absolutely necessary, and highly complicated, the mind cannot grasp them, and the result is a total deprivation of all power of imagination associative in such matter. For this reason, no human mind has ever conceived a new animal. For as it is evident that in an animal, every part implies all the rest; that is, the form of the eye involves the form of the brow and nose, these the form of the forehead and lip, these of the head and chin, and so on, so that it is physically impossible to conceive of any one of these members, unless we conceive the relation it bears to the whole animal; and as this relation is necessary, certain, and complicated, allowing of no license or inaccuracy, the intellect utterly fails under the load, and is reduced to mere composition, putting the bird's wing on men's shoulders, or half the human body to half the horse's, in doing which there is no action of imagination, but only of fancy; though in the treatment and contemplation of the compound form there may be much imagination, as we shall presently see. (Chap. III. § 30.)

§ 11. How manifested in treatment of uncer- The matter, therefore, in which associative imagination can be shown is that which admits of great

license and variety of arrangements, and in which a certain amount of relation only is required; as especially in the elements of landscape painting, in which best it may be illustrated.

tain relations
Its deficiency
illustrated

When an unimaginative painter is about to draw a tree, (and we will suppose him, for better illustration of the point in question, to have good feeling and correct knowledge of the nature of trees,) he probably lays on his paper such a general form as he knows to be characteristic of the tree to be drawn, and such as he believes will fall in agreeably with the other masses of his picture, which we will suppose partly prepared. When this form is set down, he assuredly finds it has done something he did not intend it to do. It has mimicked some prominent line, or overpowered some necessary mass. He begins pruning and changing, and after several experiments, succeeds in obtaining a form which does no material mischief to any other. To this form he proceeds to attach a trunk, and having probably a received notion or rule (for the unimaginative painter never works without a principle) that tree trunks ought to lean first one way and then the other as they go up, and ought not to stand under the middle of the tree, he sketches a serpentine form of requisite propriety; when it has gone up far enough, that is till it begins to look disagreeably long, he will begin to ramify it, and if there be another tree in the picture with two large branches, he knows that this, by all laws of composition, ought to have three or four, or some different number; one because he knows that if three or four branches start from the same point they will look formal, therefore he makes them start from points one above another, and because equal distances are improper, therefore they shall start at unequal distances. When they are fairly started, he knows they must undulate or go backwards and forwards, which accordingly he makes them do at random; and because he knows that all forms ought to be contrasted, therefore he makes one bend down while the other three go up. The three that go up he knows must not go up without interfering with each other, and so he makes two of them cross. He thinks it also proper that there should be variety of character in them, so he makes the one that bends down graceful and flexible, and of the two that cross, he splinters one and makes a stump of it. He repeats

the process among the more complicated minor boughs, until coming to the smallest, he thinks farther care unnecessary, but draws them freely, and by chance. Having to put on the foliage, he will make it flow properly in the direction of the tree's growth, he will make all the extremities graceful, but will be grievously plagued by finding them come all alike, and at last will be obliged to spoil a number of them altogether, in order to obtain opposition. They will not, however, be united in this their spoliation, but will remain uncomfortably separate and individually ill-tempered. He consoles himself by the reflection that it is unnatural for all of them to be equally perfect.

§ 12. Laws of art, the safeguard of the unimaginative,

Now I suppose that through the whole of this process he has been able to refer to his definite memory or conception of nature for every one of the fragments he has successively added, that the details, color, fractures, insertions, etc., of his boughs, are all either actual recollections or bassed on secure knowledge of the tree, (and herein I allow far more than is commonly the case with unimaginative painters.) But as far as the process of combination is concerned, it is evident that from beginning to end his laws have been his safety, and his plague has been his liberty. He has been compelled to work at random, or under the guidance of feeling only, whenever there was anything left to his own decision. He has never been decided in anything except in what he *must* or *must not* do. He has walked as a drunken man on a broad road, his guides are the hedges; and between these limits, the broader the way, the worse he gets on.

§ 13. Are by the imaginative painter despised. Tests of imagination.

The advance of the imaginative artist is precisely the reverse of this. He has no laws. He defies all restraint, and cuts down all hedges. There is nothing within the limits of natural possibility that he dares not do, or that he allows the necessity of doing. The laws of nature he knows, these are to him no restraint. They are his own nature. All other laws or limits he sets at utter defiance, his journey is over an untrodden and pathless plain. But he sees his end over the waste from the first, and goes straight at it, never losing sight of it, nor throwing away a step. Nothing can stop him, nothing turn him aside; falcons and lynxes are of slow and uncertain sight compared with his. He saw his tree, trunk,

boughs, foliage and all, from the first moment; not only the tree but the sky behind it; not only that tree or sky, but all the other great features of his picture: by what intense power of instantaneous selection and amalgamation cannot be explained, but by this it may be proved and tested, that if we examine the tree of the unimaginative painter, we shall find that on removing any part or parts of it, the rest will indeed suffer, as being deprived of the proper development of a tree, and as involving a blank space that wants occupation; but the portions left are not made discordant or disagreeable. They are absolutely and in themselves as valuable as they can be, every stem is a perfect stem, and every twig a graceful twig, or at least as perfect and as graceful as they were before the removal of the rest. But if we try the same experiment on the imaginative painter's work, and break off the merest stem or twig of it, it all goes to pieces like a Prince Rupert's drop. There is not so much as a seed of it but it lies on the tree's life, like the grain upon the tongue of Chaucer's sainted child. Take it away, and the boughs will sing to us no longer. All is dead and cold.

§ 14. The monotony of unimaginative treatment.

This then is the first sign of the presence of real imagination as opposed to composition. But here is another not less important.

We have seen that as each part is selected and fitted by the unimaginative painter, he renders it, in itself, as beautiful as he is able. If it be ugly, it remains so, he is incapable of correcting it by the addition of another ugliness, and therefore he chooses all his features as fair as they may be (at least if his object be beauty.) But a small proportion only of the ideas he has at his disposal will reach his standard of absolute beauty. The others will be of no use to him, and among those which he permits himself to use, there will be so marked a family likeness, that he will be more and more cramped, as his picture advances, for want of material, and tormented by multiplying resemblances, unless disguised by some artifice of light and shade or other forced difference, and with all the differences he can imagine, his tree will yet show a sameness and sickening repetition in all its parts, and all his trees will be like one another, except so far as one leans east and another west, one is broadest at the top and another at the bottom, while through all this insipid repetition,

the means by which he forces contrast, dark boughs opposed to light, rugged to smooth, etc., will be painfully evident, to the utter destruction of all dignity and repose. The imaginative work is necessarily the absolute opposite of all this. As all its parts are imperfect, and as there is an unlimited supply of imperfection, (for the ways in which things may be wrong are infinite,) the imagination is never at a loss, nor ever likely to repeat itself; nothing comes amiss to it, but whatever rude matter it receives, it instantly so arranges that it comes right; all things fall into their place and appear in that place perfect, useful, and evidently not to be spared, so that of its combinations there is endless variety, and every intractable and seemingly unavailable fragment that we give to it, is instantly turned to some brilliant use, and made the nucleus of a new group of glory; however poor or common the gift, it will be thankful for it, treasure it up, and pay in gold, and it has that life in it and fire, that wherever it passes, among the dead bones and dust of things, behold a shaking, and the bones come together, bone to his bone.

§ 15. Imagination never repeats itself.

§ 16. Relation of the imaginative faculty to the theoretic.

And now we find what noble sympathy and unity there is between the imaginative and theoretic faculties. Both agree in this, that they reject nothing, and are thankful for all; but the theoretic faculty takes out of everything that which is beautiful, while the imaginative faculty takes hold of the very imperfections which the theoretic rejects, and by means of these angles and roughnesses, it joints and bolts the separate stones into a mighty temple, wherein the theoretic faculty in its turn, does deepest homage. Thus sympathetic in their desires, harmoniously diverse in their operation, each working for the other with what the other needs not, all things external to man are by one or other turned to good.

§ 17. Modification of its manifestation.

Now we have hitherto, for the sake of clearness, opposed the total absence of imagination to the perfect presence of it, in order to make the difference between composition and imagination thoroughly understood. But if we are to give examples of either the want or the presence of the power, it is necessary to note the circumstances by which both are modified. In the first place, few artists of any standing are totally devoid of this faculty, some small measure of it most of

them possess, though of all the forms of intellect, this, and its sister, penetrative imagination, are the rarest and most precious; but few painters have reached eminence without some leaven of it, whether it can be increased by practice I doubt. On the other hand, fewer still are possessed of it in very high degree, and even with the men of most gigantic power in this respect, of whom, I think, Tintoret stands far the head, there are evident limits to its exercise, and portions to be found in their works that have not been included in the original grasp of them, but have been suggested and incorporated during their progress, or added in decoration; and with the great mass of painters there are frequent flaws and failures in the conception, so that, when they intend to produce a perfect work they throw their thought into different experimental forms, and decorate it and discipline it long before realizing it, so that there is a certain amount of mere composition in the most imaginative works; and a grain or two of imagination commonly in the most artificial. And again, whatever portions of a picture are taken honestly and without alteration from nature, have, so far as they go, the look of imagination, because all that nature does is imaginative, that is, perfect as a whole, and made up of imperfect features; so that the painter of the meanest imaginative power may yet do grand things, if he will keep to strict portraiture, and it would be well if all artists were to endeavor to do so, for if they have imagination, it will force its way in spite of them, and show itself in their every stroke, and if not, they will not get it by leaving nature, but only sink into nothingness.

§ 18. Instances of absence of imagination.—Claude, Gaspar Poussin.

Keeping these points in view, it is interesting to observe the different degrees and relations of the imagination, as accompanied with more or less feeling or desire of harmony, vigor of conception, or constancy of reference to truth. Of men of name, perhaps Claude is the best instance of a want of imagination, nearly total, borne out by painful but untaught study of nature, and much feeling for abstract beauty of form, with none whatever for harmony of expression. In Gaspar Poussin, we have the same want of imagination disguised by more masculine qualities of mind, and grander reachings after sympathy. Thus in the sacrifice of Isaac in our own gallery, the spirit of the composition is solemn and unbroken; it would

have been a grand picture if the forms of the mass of foliage on the right, and of the clouds in the centre, had not been hopelessly unimaginative. The stormy wind of the picture of Dido and Eneas blows loudly through its leaves, but the total want of invention in the cloud forms bears it down beyond redemption. The foreground tree of the La Riccia (compare Part II. Sec. VI. Chap. I. § 6.) is another characteristic instance of absolute nullity of imagination.

§ 19. Its presence.—Salvator, Nicolo Poussin, Titian, Tintoret.

In Salvator, the imagination is vigorous, the composition dextrous and clever, as in the St. Jerome of the Brera Gallery, the Diogenes of the Pitti, and the pictures of the Guadagni palace. All are rendered valueless by coarseness of feeling and habitual non-reference to nature.

All the landscape of Nicolo Poussin is imaginative, but the development of the power in Tintoret and Titian is so unapproachably intense that the mind unwillingly rests elsewhere. The four landscapes which occur to me as the most magnificently characteristic are, first, the Flight into Egypt, of the Scuola di San Rocco (Tintoret;) secondly, the Titian of the Camuccini collection at Rome, with the figures by John Bellini; thirdly, Titian's Saint Jerome, in the Brera Gallery at Milan; and fourthly, the St. Pietro Martire, which I name last, in spite of its importance, because there is something unmeaning and unworthy of Titian about the undulation of the trunks, and the upper part of it is destroyed by the intrusion of some dramatic clouds of that species which I have enough described in our former examination of the central cloud region, § 13.

I do not mean to set these four works above the rest of the landscape of these masters; I name them only because the landscape is in them prominent and characteristic. It would be well to compare with them the other backgrounds of Tintoret in the Scuola, especially that of the Temptation and the Agony in the Garden, and the landscape of the two large pictures in the church of La Madonna dell' Orto.

§ 20. And Turner.

But for immediate and close illustration, it is perhaps best to refer to a work more accessible, the Cephalus and Procris of Turner, in Liber Studiorum.

I know of no landscape more purely or magnificently imagina-

tive or bearing more distinct evidence of the relative and simultaneous conception of the parts. Let the reader first cover with his hand the two trunks that rise against the sky on the right, and ask himself how any termination of the central mass so *ugly* as the straight trunk which he will then painfully see, could have been conceived or admitted without simultaneous conception of the trunks he has taken away on the right? Let him again conceal the whole central mass, and leave these two only, and again ask himself whether anything so ugly as that bare trunk in the shape of a Y, could have been admitted without reference to the central mass? Then let him remove from this trunk its two arms, and try the effect; let him again remove the single trunk on the extreme right; then let him try the third trunk without the excrescence at the bottom of it; finally, let him conceal the fourth trunk from the right, with the slender boughs at the top; he will find in each case that he has destroyed a feature on which everything else depends, and if proof be required of the vital power of still smaller features, let him remove the sunbeam that comes through beneath the faint mass of trees on the hill in the distance.*

It is useless to enter into farther particulars; the reader may be left to his own close examination of this and of the other works of Turner, in which he will always find the associative imagination developed in the most profuse and marvellous modes, especially in the drawing of foliage and skies, in both of which the presence or absence of the associative power may best be tested in all artists. I have, however, confined my present illustrations chiefly to foliage, because other operations of the imagination besides the associative, interfere extensively in the treatment of sky.

§ 21. The due function of Associative imagination with respect to nature.

There remains but one question to be determined relating to this faculty, what operation, namely, supposing it possessed in high degree, it has or ought to have in the artist's treatment of natural scenery.

I have just said that nature is always imaginative, but it does not follow that her imagination is always of high subject, or that the imagination of all the parts is of a like and sympathetic kind; the boughs of every bramble bush are imaginatively arranged, so are those of every oak and cedar; but it does not follow that there

* This ray of light, however, has an imaginative power of another kind, presently to be spoken of. Compare Chap. IV. § 18.

is imaginative sympathy between bramble and cedar. There are few natural scenes whose harmonies are not conceivably improvable either by banishment of some discordant point, or by addition of some sympathetic one; it constantly happens that there is a profuseness too great to be comprehended, or an inequality in the pitch, meaning, and intensity of different parts. The imagination will banish all that is extraneous, it will seize out of the many threads of different feeling which nature has suffered to become entangled, one only, and where that seems thin and likely to break, it will spin it stouter, and in doing this, it never knots, but weaves in the new thread, so that all its work looks as pure and true as nature itself, and cannot be guessed from it but by its exceeding simplicity, (*known* from it, it cannot be,) so that herein we find another test of the imaginative work, that it looks always as if it had been gathered straight from nature, whereas the unimaginative shows its joints and knots, and is visibly composition.

§ 22. The sign of imaginative work is its appearance of absolute truth.

And here then we arrive at an important conclusion (though one somewhat contrary to the positions commonly held on the subject,) namely, that if anything looks unnatural, there can be no imagination in it (at least not associative.) We frequently hear works that have no truth in them, justified or elevated on the score of being imaginative. Let it be understood once for all, that imagination never designs to touch anything but truth, and though it does not follow that where there is the appearance of truth, there has been imaginative operation, of this we may be assured, that where there is appearance of falsehood, the imagination has had no hand.*

For instance, the landscape above mentioned of Titian's St. Jerome may, for aught I know, be a pure transcript of a rocky slope covered with chestnuts among his native mountains. It has all the look of a sketch from nature; if it be not, the imagination developed in it is of the highest order; if it be, the imagination has only acted in the suggestion of the dark sky, of the shape of the flakes of solemn cloud, and of the gleam of russet light along the distant ground.†

* Compare Chap. III. § 30.

† It is said at Venice that Titian took the trees of the St. Pietro Martiere out of his garden opposite Murano. I think this unlikely; there is something about the lower trunks that has a taint of composition: the thought of the

Again, it is impossible to tell whether the two nearest trunks of the Æsacus and Hesperie of the Liber Studiorum, especially the large one on the right with the ivy, have been invented, or taken straight from nature, they have all the look of accurate portraiture. I can hardly imagine anything so perfect to have been obtained except from the real thing; but we know that the imagination must have begun to operate somewhere, we cannot tell where, since the multitudinous harmonies of the rest of the picture could hardly in any real scene have continued so inviolately sweet.

The final tests, therefore, of the work of associative imagination are its intense simplicity, its perfect harmony, and its absolute truth. It may be a harmony, majestic, or humble, abrupt, or prolonged, but it is always a governed and perfect whole, evidencing in all its relations the weight, prevalence, and universal dominion of an awful, inexplicable power; a chastising, animating, and disposing mind.

whole, however, is thoroughly fine. The backgrounds of the frescoes at Padua are also very characteristic, and the well-known wood-cut of St. Francis receiving the stigmata, one of the mightiest of existing landscape thoughts; and yet it is pure portraiture of pine and Spanish chestnut.

CHAPTER III.

OF IMAGINATION PENETRATIVE.

§ 1. Imagination penetrative is concerned not with the combining but apprehending of things.

THUS far we have been defining that combining operation of the imagination, which appears to be in a sort mechanical, yet takes place in the same inexplicable modes, whatever be the order of conception submitted to it, though I chose to illustrate it by its dealings with mere matter before taking cognizance of any nobler subjects of imagery. We must now examine the dealing of the imagination with its separate conceptions, and endeavor to understand not only its principles of selection, but its modes of apprehension with respect to what it selects.

§ 2. Milton's and Dante's description of flame.

When Milton's Satan first "rears from off the pool, his mighty stature," the image of Leviathan before suggested not being yet abandoned, the effect on the fire-wave is described as of the upheaved monster on the ocean stream.

> "On each hand the flames,
> Driven backwards, slope their pointing spires, and rolled
> In billows, leave in the midst a horrid vale."

And then follows a fiercely restless piece of volcanic imagery:

> "As when the force
> Of subterranean wind transports a hill
> Torn from Pelorus, or the shattered side
> Of thundering Ætna, whose combustible
> And fuell'd entrails thence conceiving fire,
> Sublimed with mineral fury, aid the winds,
> And leave a singed bottom, all involved
> With stench and smoke; such resting found the sole
> Of unblest feet."

Yet I think all this is too far detailed, and deals too much with externals: we feel rather the form of the fire-waves than their fury,

we walk upon them too securely, and the fuel, sublimation, smoke, and singeing, seem to me images only of partial combustion; they vary and extend the conception, but they lower the thermometer. Look back, if you will, and add to the description the glimmering of the livid flames; the sulphurous hail and red lightning; yet all together, however they overwhelm us with horror, fail of making us thoroughly, unendurably hot. The intense essence of flame has not been given. Now hear Dante:—

> " Feriami 'l Sole in su l'omero destro
> Che già raggiando tutto l'Occidente
> *Mutava in bianco aspetto di cilestro.*
> *Ed io* facea *con l'ombra più rovente*
> *Parer la fiamma.*"

That is a slight touch; he has not gone to Ætna nor Pelorus for fuel; but we shall not soon recover from it—he has taken our breath away and leaves us gasping. No smoke nor cinders there. Pure, white, hurtling, formless flame; very fire crystal, we can not make spires nor waves of it, nor divide it, nor walk on it, there is no question about singeing soles of feet. It is lambent annihilation.

§ 3. The imagination seizes always by the innermost point.

Such is always the mode in which the highest imaginative faculty seizes its materials. It never stops at crusts or ashes, or outward images of any kind, it ploughs them all aside, and plunges into the very central fiery heart, nothing else will content its spirituality, whatever semblances and various outward shows and phases its subject may possess, go for nothing, it gets within all fence, cuts down to the root, and drinks the very vital sap of that it deals with: once there it is at liberty to throw up what new shoots it will, so always that the true juice and sap be in them, and to prune and twist them at its pleasure, and bring them to fairer fruit than grew on the old tree; but all this pruning and twisting is work that it likes not, and often does ill; its function and gift are the getting at the root, its nature and dignity depend on its holding things always by the heart. Take its hand from off the beating of that, and it will prophesy no longer; it looks not in the eyes, it judges not by the voice, it describes not by outward features, all that it affirms, judges, or describes, it affirms from within.

§ 4. It acts intuitively and without reasoning.

It may seem to the reader that I am incorrect in calling this penetrating, possession-taking faculty, imagination. Be it so, the name is of little consequence; the faculty itself, called by what name we will, I insist upon as the highest intellectual power of man. There is no reasoning in it, it works not by algebra, nor by integral calculus, it is a piercing, Pholas-like mind's tongue that works and tastes into the very rock heart, no matter what be the subject submitted to it, substance or spirit, all is alike, divided asunder, joint and marrow, whatever utmost truth, life, principle, it has, laid bare, and that which has no truth, life, nor principle, dissipated into its original smoke at a touch. The whispers at men's ears it lifts into visible angels. Vials that have lain sealed in the deep sea a thousand years it unseals, and brings out of them Genii.

Every great conception of poet or painter is held and treated by this faculty. Every character that is so much as touched by men like Æschylus, Homer, Dante, or Shakspeare, is by them held by the heart; and every circumstance or sentence of their being, speaking, or seeming, is seized by process from within, and is referred to that inner secret spring of which the hold is never lost for an instant; so that every sentence, as it has been thought out from the heart, opens for us a way down to the heart, leads us to the centre, and then leaves us to gather what more we may; it is the open sesame of a huge, obscure, endless cave, with inexhaustible treasure of pure gold scattered in it: the wandering about and gathering the pieces may be left to any of us, all can accomplish that; but the first opening of that invisible door in the rock is of the imagination only.

§ 5. Signs of it in language.

Hence there is in every word set down by the imaginative mind an awful under-current of meaning, and evidence and shadow upon it of the deep places out of which it has come. It is often obscure, often half told, for he who wrote it, in his clear seeing of the things beneath, may have been impatient of detailed interpretation, but if we choose to dwell upon it and trace it, it will leads us always securely back to that metropolis of the soul's dominion from which we may follow out all the ways and tracks to its farthest coasts.

I think the "Quel giorno più non vi leggemmo avante" of Francesca di Rimini, and the "He has no children" of Macduff,

are as fine instances as can be given, but the sign and mark of it are visible on every line of the four great men above instanced.

§ 6. Absence of imagination, how shown.

The imaginative writer, on the other hand, as he has never pierced to the heart, so he can never touch it; if he has to paint a passion, he remembers the external signs of it, he collects expressions of it from other writers, he searches for similes, he composes, exaggerates, heaps term on term, figure on figure, till we groan beneath the cold, disjointed heap; but it is all faggot and no fire, the life breath is not in it, his passion has the form of the Leviathan, but it never makes the deep boil, he fastens us all at anchor in the scaly rind of it, our sympathies remain as idle as a painted ship upon a painted ocean.

And that virtue of originality that men so strain after, is not newness, as they vainly think, (there is nothing new,) it is only genuineness; it all depends on this single glorious faculty of getting to the spring of things and working out from that; it is the coolness, and clearness, and deliciousness of the water fresh from the fountain head, opposed to the thick, hot, unrefreshing drainage from other men's meadows.

§ 7. Distinction between imagination and fancy.

This freshness, however, is not to be taken for an infallible sign of imagination, inasmuch as it results also from a vivid operation of fancy, whose parallel function to this division of the imaginative faculty it is here necessary to distinguish.

I believe it will be found that the entirely unimaginative mind *sees* nothing of the object it has to dwell upon or describe, and is therefore utterly unable, as it is blind itself, to set anything before the eyes of the reader.*

The fancy sees the outside, and is able to give a portrait of the outside, clear, brilliant, and full of detail.†

The imagination sees the heart and inner nature, and makes them felt, but is often obscure, mysterious, and interrupted, in its giving of outer detail.

Take an instance. A writer with neither imagination nor fancy, describing a fair lip, does not see it, but thinks about it, and about what is said of it, and calls it well-turned, or rosy, or delicate, or

* Compare Arist. Rhet. III. 11.

† For the distinction between fancy and simple conception; see Chap. IV. § 3.

lovely, or afflicts us with some other quenching and chilling epithet. Now hear fancy speak,—

> "Her lips were red, and one was thin,
> Compared with that was next her chin,
> Some bee had stung it newly."*

The real, red, bright being of the lip is there in a moment. But it is all outside; no expression yet, no mind. Let us go a step farther with Warner, of fair Rosamond struck by Eleanor.

> "With that she dashed her on the lips
> So dyed double red;
> Hard was the heart that gave the blow,
> Soft were those lips that bled."

The tenderness of mind begins to mingle with the outside color, the imagination is seen in its awakening. Next Shelley,—

> "Lamp of life, thy lips are burning
> Through the veil that seems to hide them,
> As the radiant lines of morning
> Through thin clouds, ere they divide them."

There dawns the entire soul in that morning; yet we may stop if we choose at the image still external, at the crimson clouds. The imagination is contemplative rather than penetrative. Last, hear Hamlet,—

"Here hung those lips that I have kissed, I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now, your gambols, your songs, your flashes of merriment that were wont to set the table on a roar?"

There is the essence of lip, and the full power of the imagination.

Again, compare Milton's flowers in Lycidas with Perdita's. In

* I take this and the next instance from Leigh Hunt's admirable piece of criticism, "Imagination and Fancy," which ought to be read with care, and to which, though somewhat loosely arranged, I may refer for all the filling up and illustration that the subject requires. With respect to what has just been said respecting want of imagination, compare his criticism of Addison's Cato, p. 28. I cannot, however, confirm his judgment, nor admit his selection of instances, among painters: he has looked to their manner only and habitual choice of subject, without feeling their power; and has given work to the coarseness, mindlessness, and eclecticism of Guido and the Carracci, which in its poetical demand of tenderness might have foiled Pinturicchio, of dignity Leonardo and of color, Giorgione.

Milton it happens, I think, generally, and in the case before us most certainly, that the imagination is mixed and broken with fancy, and so the strength of the imagery is part of iron and part of clay.

"Bring the rathe primrose, that forsaken dies (Imagination)
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine, (Nugatory)
The white pink, and the pansy freaked with jet,— (Fancy)
The glowing violet, (Imagination)
The musk rose, and the well-attired woodbine, (Fancy, vulgar)
With cowslips wan, that hang the pensive head, (Imagination)
And every flower that sad embroidery wears." (Mixed)

Then hear Perdita:—

"O, Proserpina,
For the flowers now, that frighted thou let'st fall
From Dis's wagon. Daffodils
That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty. Violets, dim,
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes
Or Cytherea's breath; pale primroses
That die unmarried, ere they can behold
Bright Phœbus in his strength, a malady
Most incident to maids."

Observe how the imagination in these last lines goes into the very inmost soul of every flower, after having touched them all at first with that heavenly timidness, the shadow of Proserpine's; and gilded them with celestial gathering, and never stops on their spots, or their bodily shape, while Milton sticks in the stains upon them, and puts us off with that unhappy freak of jet in the very flower that without this bit of paper-staining would have been the most precious to us of all. "There is pansies, that's for thoughts."

§ 8. Fancy how involved with imagination.

So I believe it will be found throughout the operation of the fancy, that it has to do with the outsides of things, and is content therewith: of this there can be no doubt in such passages as that description of Mab, so often given as an illustration of it, and many other instances will be found in Leigh Hunt's work already referred to. Only some embarrassment is caused by passages in which fancy is seizing the outward signs of emotion, understanding them as such, and yet, in pursuance of her proper function, taking for her share, and for

that which she chooses to dwell upon, the outside sign rather than the emotion. Note in Macbeth that brilliant instance.

> "Where the Norweyan banners flout the sky
> And fan our people cold."

The outward shiver and coldness of fear is seized on, and irregularly but admirably attributed by the fancy to the drift of the banners. Compare Solomon's Song, where the imagination stays not at the outside, but dwells on the fearful emotion itself?

"Who is she that looketh forth as the morning; fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?"

§ 9. Fancy is never serious.

Now, if this be the prevailing characteristic of the two faculties, it is evident that certain other collateral differences will result from it. Fancy, as she stays at the externals, can never feel. She is one of the hardest hearted of the intellectual faculties, or rather one of the most purely and simply intellectual. She cannot be made serious,* no edge-tools but she will play with; whereas the imagination is in all things the reverse. She cannot be but serious; she sees too far, too darkly, too solemnly, too earnestly, ever to smile. There is something in the heart of everything, if we can reach it, that we shall not be inclined to laugh at. The ἀνήριθμον γέλασμα of the sea is on its surface, not in the deep.

§ 10. Want of seriousness the bar to high art at the present time.

And thus there is reciprocal action between the intensity of moral feeling and the power of imagination; for, on the one hand, those who have keenest sympathy are those who look closest and pierce deepest, and hold securest; and, on the other, those who have so pierced and seen the melancholy deeps of things, are filled with the most intense passion and gentleness of sympathy. Hence, I suppose that the powers of the imagination may always be tested by accompanying tenderness of emotion, and thus, (as Byron said,) there is no tenderness like Dante's, neither any intensity nor seriousness like his, such seriousness that it is incapable of perceiving that which is commonplace or ridiculous, but fuses all down into its white-hot fire; and, on the other hand, I suppose the chief bar to the action of imagination, and stop to all great-

* Fancy, in her third function may, however, become serious, and gradually rise into imagination in doing so. Compare Chap. IV. § 5.

ness in this present age of ours, is its mean and shallow love of jest and jeer, so that if there be in any good and lofty work a flaw or failing, or undipped vulnerable part where sarcasm may stick or stay, it is caught at, and pointed at, and buzzed about, and fixed upon, and stung into, as a recent wound is by flies, and nothing is ever taken seriously nor as it was meant, but always, if it may be, turned the wrong way, and misunderstood; and while this is so, there is not, nor cannot be any hope of achievement of high things; men dare not open their hearts to us, if we are to broil them on a thorn-fire.

§ 11. Imagination is quiet; fancy, restless.

This, then, is one essential difference between imagination and fancy, and another is like it and resultant from it, that the imagination being at the heart of things, poises herself there, and is still, quiet, and brooding; comprehending all around her with her fixed look, but the fancy staying at the outside of things, cannot see them all at once, but runs hither and thither, and round and about to see more and more, bounding merrily from point to point, and glittering here and there, but necessarily always settling, if she settle at all, on a point only, never embracing the whole. And from these single points she can strike out analogies and catch resemblances, which, so far as the point she looks at is concerned, are true, but would be false, if she could see through to the other side. This, however, she cares not to do, the point of contact is enough for her, and even if there be a gap left between the two things and they do not quite touch, she will spring from one to the other like an electric spark, and be seen brightest in her leaping.

§ 12. The detailing operation of fancy,

Now these differences between the imagination and the fancy hold, not only in the way they lay hold of separate conceptions, but even in the points they occupy of time, for the fancy loves to run hither and thither in time, and to follow long chains of circumstances from link to link; but the imagination, if it may, gets holds of a moment or link in the middle that implies all the rest, and fastens there. Hence Fuseli's aphorism, "Invention never suffers the action to expire, nor the spectator's fancy to consume itself in preparation, or stagnate into repose. It neither begins from the egg, nor coldly gathers the remains."

In Retsch's illustrations to Schiller's Kampf mit dem Drachen,

we have an instance, miserably feeble indeed, but characteristic, and suited to our present purpose, of the detailing, finishing action of the fancy. The dragon is drawn from head to tail, vulture eyes, serpent teeth, forked tongue, fiery crest, armor, claws, and coils as grisly as may be; his den is drawn, and all the dead bones in it, and all the savage forest-country about it far and wide; we have him from the beginning of his career to the end, devouring, rampant, victorious over whole armies, gorged with death; we are present at all the preparations for his attack, see him receive his death-wound, and our anxieties are finally becalmed by seeing him lie peaceably dead on his back.

§ 13. And suggestive, of the imagination.

All the time we have never got into the dragon heart, we have never once felt real pervading horror, nor sense of the creature's being; it is throughout nothing but an ugly composition of claw and scale. Now take up Turner's Jason, Liber Studiorum, and observe how the imagination can concentrate all this, and infinitely more, into one moment. No far forest country, no secret paths, nor cloven hills, nothing but a gleam of pale horizontal sky, that broods over pleasant places far away, and sends in, through the wild overgrowth of the thicket, a ray of broken daylight into the hopeless pit. No flaunting plumes nor brandished lances, but stern purpose in the turn of the crestless helmet, visible victory in the drawing back of the prepared right arm behind the steady point. No more claws, nor teeth, nor manes, nor stinging tails. We have the dragon, like everything else, by the middle. We need see no more of him. All his horror is in that fearful, slow, griding upheaval of the single coil. Spark after spark of it, ring after ring, is sliding into the light, the slow glitter steals along him step by step, broader and broader, a lighting of funeral lamps one by one, quicker and quicker; a moment more, and he is out upon us, all crash and blaze among those broken trunks;—but he will be nothing then to what he is now.

§ 14. This suggestiveness how opposed to vacancy.

Now, it is necessary here very carefully to distinguish between that character of the work which depends on the imagination of the beholder, and that which results from the imagination of the artist, for a work is often called imaginative when it merely leaves room for the action of the imagination; whereas though nearly all imaginative works

do this, yet it may be done also by works that have in them no imagination at all. A few shapeless scratches or accidental stains on a wall; or the forms of clouds, or any other complicated accidents, will set the imagination to work to coin something out of them, and all paintings in which there is much gloom or mystery, possess therein a certain sublimity owing to the play given to the beholder's imagination, without, necessarily, being in the slightest degree imaginative themselves. The vacancy of a truly imaginative work results not from absence of ideas, or incapability of grasping and detailing them, but from the painter having told the whole pith and power of his subject and disdaining to tell more, and the sign of this being the case is, that the imagination of the beholder is forced to act in a certain mode, and feels itself overpowered and borne away by that of the painter, and not able to defend itself, nor go which way it will, and the value of the work depends on the truth, authority, and inevitability of this suggestiveness, and on the absolute right choice of the critical moment. Now observe in this work of Turner's, that the whole value of it depends on the character of curve assumed by the serpent's body; for had it been a mere semicircle, or gone down in a series of smaller coils, it would have been in the first case, ridiculous, as false and unlike a serpent, and in the second, disgusting, nothing more than an exaggerated viper, but it is that *coming straight* at the right hand which suggests the drawing forth of an enormous weight, and gives the bent part its springing look, that frightens us. Again, remove the light trunk* on the left, and observe how useless all the gloom of the picture would have been, if this trunk had not given it depth and *hollowness*. Finally and chiefly, observe that the painter is not satisfied even with all the suggestiveness thus obtained, but to make sure of us, and force us, whether we will or no, to walk his way, and not ours, the trunks of the trees on the right are all cloven into yawning and writhing heads and bodies, and alive with dragon energy all about us, note especially the nearest with its gaping jaws and claw-like branch at the seeming shoulder; a kind of suggestion which in itself is not imaginative, but merely fanciful, (using the term fancy in that third sense not yet explained, corresponding to the third office of imagination;) but it is imaginative in its present

* I am describing from a proof: in bad impresstons this trunk is darkened.

use and application, for the painter addresses thereby that morbid and fearful condition of mind which he has endeavored to excite in the spectator, and which in reality would have seen in every trunk and bough, as it penetrated into the deeper thicket, the object of its terror.

§ 15. Imagination addresses itself to imagination.

It is nevertheless evident, that however suggestive the work or picture may be, it cannot have effect unless we are ourselves both watchful of its very hint, and capable of understanding and carrying it out, and although I think that this power of continuing or accepting the direction of feeling given is less a peculiar gift, like that of the original seizing, than a faculty dependent on attention, and improvable by cultivation; yet, to a certain extent, the imaginative work will not, I think, be rightly esteemed except by a mind of some corresponding power; not but that there is an intense enjoyment in minds of feeble yet light conception in the help and food they get from those of stronger thought; but a certain imaginative susceptibility is at any rate necessary, and above all things, earnestness and feeling, so that assuredly a work of high conceptive dignity will be always incomprehensible and valueless except in those who go to it in earnest and give it time; and this is peculiarly the case when the imagination acts not merely on the immediate subject, nor in giving a fanciful and peculiar character to prominent objects, as we have just seen, but busies itself throughout in expressing occult and far-sought sympathies in every minor detail, of which action the most sublime instances are found in the works of Tintoret, whose intensity of imagination is such that there is not the commonest subject to which he will not attach a range of suggestiveness almost limitless, nor a stone, leaf, or shadow, nor anything so small, but he will give it meaning and oracular voice.

Instances from the works of Tintoret.

§ 16. The Entombment.

In the centre of the gallery at Parma, there is a canvas of Tintoret's, whose sublimity of conception and grandeur of color are seen in the highest perfection, by their opposition to the morbid and vulgar sentimentalism of Correggio. It is an Entombment of Christ, with a landscape distance, of whose technical composition and details I shall have much to say hereafter, at present I speak only of the thought it is intended to convey. An ordinary or unimaginative painter would have made

prominent, among his objects of landscape, such as might naturally be supposed to have been visible from the sepulchre, and shown with the crosses of Calvary, some portion of Jerusalem, or of the Valley of Jehoshaphat. But Tintoret has a far higher aim. Dwelling on the peculiar force of the event before him, as the fulfilment of the final prophecy respecting the passion, "He made his grave with the wicked and with the *rich* in his death," he desires to direct the mind of the spectator to this receiving of the body of Christ, in its contrast with the houseless birth and the desert life. And, therefore, behind the ghastly tomb-grass that shakes its black and withered blades above the rocks of the sepulchre, there is seen, not the actual material distance of the spot itself, (though the crosses are shown faintly,) but that to which the thoughtful spirit would return in vision, a desert place, where the foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, and against the barred twilight of the melancholy sky are seen the mouldering beams and shattered roofing of a ruined cattle-shed, the canopy of the nativity.

§ 17. The Annunciation.

Let us take another instance. No subject has been more frequently or exquisitely treated by the religious painters than that of the Annunciation, though as usual, the most perfect type of its pure ideal has been given by Angelico, and by him with the most radiant consummation (so far as I know) in a small reliquary in the sacristy of St^a. Maria Novella. The background there, however, is altogether decorative; but in the fresco of the corridor of St. Mark's, the concomitant circumstances are of exceeding loveliness. The Virgin sits in an open loggia, resembling that of the Florentine church of L'Annunziata. Before her is a meadow of rich herbage, covered with daisies. Behind her is seen through the door at the end of the loggia, her chamber with its single grated window, through which a star-like beam of light falls into the silence. All is exquisite in feeling, but not inventive nor imaginative. Severe would be the shock and painful the contrast, if we could pass in an instant from that pure vision to the wild thought of Tintoret. For not in meek reception of the adoring messenger, but startled by the rush of his horizontal and rattling wings, the virgin sits, not in the quiet loggia, not by the green pasture of the restored soul, but houseless, under the shelter of a palace vestibule ruined and abandoned,

with the noise of the axe and the hammer in her ears, and the tumult of a city round about her desolation. The spectator turns away at first, revolted, from the central object of the picture, forced painfully and coarsely forward, a mass of shattered brickwork, with the plaster mildewed away from it, and the mortar mouldering from its seams; and if he look again, either at this or at the carpenter's tools beneath it, will perhaps see in the one and the other, nothing more than such a study of scene as Tintoret could but too easily obtain among the ruins of his own Venice, chosen to give a coarse explanation of the calling and the condition of the husband of Mary. But there is more meant than this. When he looks at the composition of the picture, he will find the whole symmetry of it depending on a narrow line of light, the edge of a carpenter's square, which connects these unused tools with an object at the top of the brickwork, a white stone, four square, the corner-stone of the old edifice, the base of its supporting column. This, I think, sufficiently explains the typical character of the whole. The ruined house is the Jewish dispensation, that obscurely arising in the dawning of the sky is the Christian; but the corner-stone of the old building remains, though the builder's tools lie idle beside it, and the stone which the builders refused is become the Headstone of the corner.

§ 18. The Baptism of Christ. Its treatment by various painters.

In this picture, however, the force of the thought hardly atones for the painfulness of the scene and the turbulence of its feeling. The power of the master is more strikingly shown in his treatment of a subject which, however important, and however deep in its meaning, supplies not to the ordinary painter material enough ever to form a picture of high interest; the Baptism of Christ. From the purity of Giotto to the intolerable, inconceivable brutality of Salvator,* every order of feeling has been displayed in its treatment;

* The picture is in the Guadagni palace. It is one of the most important landscapes Salvator ever painted. The figures are studied from street beggars. On the other side of the river, exactly opposite the point where the Baptism of Christ takes place, the painter, with a refinement of feeling peculiarly his own, has introduced some ruffians stripping off their shirts to bathe. He is fond of this incident. It occurs again in one of the marines of the Pitti palace, with the additional interest of a foreshortened figure, swimming on its back, feet foremost, exactly in the stream of light to which the eye is principally directed.

but I am aware of no single case, except this of which I am about to speak, in which it has formed an impressive picture.

Giotto's, in the Academy of Florence, engraved in the series just published, (Galleria delle belle Arti,) is one of the most touching I know, especially in the reverent action of the attendant angels, and Leonardo's angel in that of Andrea del Verrocchio is very beautiful, but the event is one whose character and importance are ineffable upon the features: the descending dove hardly affects us, because its constant symbolical occurrence hardens us, and makes us look on it as a mere type or letter, instead of the actual presence of the Spirit; and by all the sacred painters the power that might be put into the landscape is lost, for though their use of foliage and distant sky or mountain is usually very admirable, as we shall see in the fifth chapter, yet they cannot deal with near water or rock, and the hexagonal and basaltic protuberances of their river shore are I think too painful to be endured even by the most acceptant mind, as eminently in that of Angelico, in the Vita di Christo, which, as far I can judge, is a total failure in action, expression, and all else; and in general it is in this subject especially, that the greatest painters show their weakness. For this reason, I suppose, and feeling the difficulty of it, Tintoret has thrown into it his utmost strength, and it becomes noble in his hands by his most singularly imaginative expression, not only of the immediate fact, but of the whole train of thought of which it is suggestive; and by his considering the baptism not only as the submission of Christ to the fulfilment of all righteousness, but as the opening of the earthly struggle with the prince of the powers of the air, which instantly beginning in the temptation, ended only on the cross.

§ 19. By Tintoret.

The river flows fiercely under the shadow of a great rock. From its opposite shore, thickets of close, gloomy foliage rise against the rolling chasm of heaven, through which breaks the brightness of the descending Spirit. Across these, dividing them asunder, is stretched a horizontal floor of flaky cloud, on which stand the hosts of heaven. Christ kneels upon the water, and does not sink; the figure of St. John is indistinct, but close beside his raised right arm there is a spectre in the black shade; the fiend, harpy-shaped, hardly seen, glares down upon Christ with eyes of fire, waiting his time. Beneath

this figure there comes out of the mist a dark hand, the arm unseen, extended to a net in the river, the spars of which are in the shape of a cross. Behind this the roots and under stems of the trees are cut away by the cloud, and beneath it, and through them, is seen a vision of wild, melancholy, boundless light, the sweep of the desert, and the figure of Christ is seen therein alone, with his arms lifted as in supplication or ecstacy, borne of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.

There are many circumstances which combine to give to this noble work a more than usually imaginative character. The symbolical use of the net, which is the cross net still used constantly in the canals of Venice, and common throughout Italy, is of the same character as that of the carpenter's tools in the Annunciation; but the introduction of the spectral figure is of bolder reach, and yet more, that vision of the after temptation which is expressly indicated as a subject of thought rather than of sight, because it is in a part of the scene, which in *fact* must have been occupied by the trunks of the trees whose tops are seen above; and another circumstance completes the mystic character of the whole, that the flaky clouds which support the angelic hosts take on the right, where the light first falls upon them, the shape of the head of a fish, the well-known type both of the baptismal sacrament, and of Christ.

§ 20. The Crucifixion.

But the most exquisite instance of this imaginative power occurs in an incident in the background of the Crucifixion. I will not insult this marvellous picture by an effort at a verbal account of it. I would not whitewash it with praise, and I refer to it only for the sake of two thoughts peculiarly illustrative of the intellectual faculty immediately under discussion. In the common and most catholic treatment of the subject, the mind is either painfully directed to the bodily agony, coarsely expressed by outward anatomical signs, or else it is permitted to rest on that countenance inconceivable by man at any time, but chiefly so in this its consummated humiliation. In the first case, the representation is revolting; in the second, inefficient, false, and sometimes blasphemous. None even of the greatest religious painters have ever, so far as I know, succeeded here; Giotto and Angelico were cramped by the traditional treatment, and the latter especially, as before observed, is but too apt to indulge in those

points of vitiated feeling which attained their worst development among the Byzantines: Perugino fails in his Christ in almost every instance (of other men than these after them we need not speak.) But Tintoret here, as in all other cases, penetrating into the root and deep places of his subject, despising all outward and bodily appearances of pain, and seeking for some means of expressing, not the rack of nerve or sinew, but the fainting of the deserted Son of God before his Eloi cry, and yet feeling himself utterly unequal to the expression of this by the countenance, has on the one hand filled his picture with such various and impetuous muscular exertion that the body of the Crucified is, by comparison, in perfect repose, and on the other has cast the countenance altogether into shade. But the agony is told by this, and by this only, that though there yet remains a chasm of light on the mountain horizon where the earthquake darkness closes upon the day, the broad and sunlike glory about the head of the Redeemer has become wan, and of the color of ashes.*

But the great painter felt he had something more to do yet. Not only that agony of the Crucified, but the tumult of the people, that rage which invoked his blood upon them and their children. Not only the brutality of the soldier, the apathy of the centurion, nor any other merely instrumental cause of the Divine suffering, but the fury of his own people, the noise against him of those for whom he died, were to be set before the eye of the understanding, if the power of the picture was to be complete. This rage, be it remembered, was one of disappointed pride; and the disappointment dated essentially from the time, when but five days before, the King of Zion came, and was received with hosannahs, riding upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass. To this time, then, it was necessary to direct the thoughts, for therein are found both the cause and the character, the excitement of, and the witness against, this madness of the people. In the shadow behind the cross, a man, riding on an ass colt, looks back to the multitude, while he points with a rod to the Christ crucified. The ass is feeding on the *remnants* of *withered palm-leaves*.

With this master-stroke I believe I may terminate all illustra-

* This circumstance, like most that lie not at the surface, has escaped Fuseli, though his remarks on the general tone of the picture are very good, as well as his opposition of it to the treatment of Rubens. (Lecture IX.)

tion of the peculiar power of the imagination over the feelings of the spectator, by the elevation into dignity and meaning of the smallest accessory circumstances. But I have not yet sufficiently dwelt on the fact from which this power arises, the absolute truth of statement of the central fact as it was, or must have been. Without this truth, this awful first moving principle, all direction of the feelings is useless. That which we cannot excite, it is of no use to know how to govern.

§ 21. The Massacre of innocents.

I have before alluded, Sect. I. Chap. XIV., to the painfulness of Raffaelle's treatment of the massacre of the innocents. Fuseli affirms of it that, "in dramatic gradation he disclosed all the mother through every image of pity and of terror." If this be so, I think the philosophical spirit has prevailed over the imaginative. The imagination never errs, it sees all that is, and all the relations and bearings of it, but it would not have confused the mortal frenzy of maternal terror with various development of maternal character. Fear, rage, and agony, at their utmost pitch, sweep away all character: humanity itself would be lost in maternity, the woman would become the mere personification of animal fury or fear. For this reason all the ordinary representations of this subject are, I think, false and cold: the artist has not heard the shrieks, nor mingled with the fugitives, he has sat down in his study to twist features methodically, and philosophize over insanity. Not so Tintoret. Knowing or feeling, that the expression of the human face was in such circumstances not to be rendered, and that the effort could only end in an ugly falsehood, he denies himself all aid from the features, he feels that if he is to place himself or us in the midst of that maddened multitude, there can be no time allowed for watching expression. Still less does he depend on details of murder or ghastliness of death; there is no blood, no stabbing or cutting, but there is an awful substitute for these in the chiaroscuro. The scene is the outer vestibule of a palace, the slippery marble floor is fearfully barred across by sanguine shadows, so that our eyes seem to become bloodshot and strained with strange horror and deadly vision; a lake of life before them, like the burning seen of the doomed Moabite on the water that came by the way of Edom; a huge flight of stairs, without parapet, descends on the left; down this rush a crowd of women mixed with the murderers; the child in the arms of one

has been seized by the limbs, she hurls herself over the edge, and falls head downmost, dragging the child out of the grasp by her weight;—she will be dashed dead in a second: two others are farther in flight, they reach the edge of a deep river,—the water is beat into a hollow by the force of their plunge;—close to us is the great struggle, a heap of the mothers entangled in one mortal writhe with each other and the swords, one of the murderers dashed down and crushed beneath them, the sword of another caught by the blade and dragged at by a woman's naked hand; the youngest and fairest of the women, her child just torn away from a death grasp and clasped to her breast with the grip of a steel vice, falls backwards helplessly over the heap, right on the sword points; all knit together and hurled down in one hopeless, frenzied, furious abandonment of body and soul in the effort to save. Their shrieks ring in our ears till the marble seems rending around us, but far back, at the bottom of the stairs, there is something in the shadow like a heap of clothes. It is a woman, sitting quiet,—quite quiet—still as any stone, she looks down steadfastly on her dead child, laid along on the floor before her, and her hand is pressed softly upon her brow.

§ 22. Various works in the Scuola di San Rocco.

This, to my mind, is the only imaginative; that is, the only true, real, heartfelt representation of the being and actuality of the subject in existence.* I should exhaust the patience of the reader if I were to dwell at length on the various stupendous developments of the imagination of Tintoret in the Scuola di San Rocco alone. I would fain join a while in that solemn pause of the journey into Egypt, where the silver boughs of the shadowy trees lace with their tremulous lines the alternate folds of fair clouds, flushed by faint crimson light, and lie across the streams of blue between those rosy islands, like the white wakes of wandering ships; or watch beside the sleep of the disciples among those massy leaves that lie so heavily on the dead of the night beneath the descent of the angel of the agony, and toss fearfully above the motion of the torches as the troop of the betrayer emerges out of the hollows of the olives; or wait through the hour of accusing beside the judgment seat of

* Note the shallow and uncomprehending notice of this picture by Fuseli, His description of the treatment of it by other painters is however true, terse and valuable

Pilate, where all is unseen, unfelt, except the one figure that stands with its head bowed down, pale like a pillar of moonlight, half bathed in the glory of the Godhead, half wrapt in the whiteness of the shroud. Of these and all the other thoughts of indescribable power that are now fading from the walls of those neglected chambers, I may perhaps endeavor at some future time to preserve some image and shadow more faithfully than by words; but I shall at present terminate our series of illustrations by reference to a work of less touching, but more tremendous appeal, the Last Judgment in the Church of Santa Maria dell' Orto. In this subject, almost all realizing or local statement had been carefully avoided by the most powerful painters, they judging it better to represent its chief circumstances as generic thoughts, and present them to the mind in a typical or abstract form. In the judgment of Angelico the treatment is purely typical, a long Campo santo, composed of two lines of graves, stretches away into the distance; on the left side of it rise the condemned; on the right the just. With Giotto and Orcagna, the conception, though less rigid, is equally typical, no effort being made at the suggestion of space, and only so much ground represented as is absolutely necessary to support the near figures and allow space for a few graves. Michael Angelo in no respect differs in his treatment, except that his figures are less symmetrically grouped, and a greater conception of space is given by their various perspective. No interest is attached to his background in itself. Fra Bartolomeo, never able to grapple with any species of sublimity except that of simple religious feeling, fails most signally in this mighty theme.* His group of the dead, including not more than ten or twelve figures, occupies the foreground only, behind them a vacant plain extends to the foot of a cindery volcano, about whose mouth several little black devils like spiders are skipping and crawling. The judgment of quick and dead is thus expressed as taking place in about a rood square, and on a dozen of people at a time; the whole of the space and horizon of the sky and land being left vacant, and the presence of the Judge of all the earth made more finite than the sweep of a whirlwind or a thunder-storm.

§ 23 The Last Judgment. How treated by various painters.

* Fresco in an out-house of the Ospedale St^a. Maria Nuova at Florence.

§ 24. By Tintoret.

By Tintoret only has this unimaginable event been grappled with in its verity; not typically nor symbolically, but as they may see it who shall not sleep, but be changed. Only one traditional circumstance he has received with Dante and Michael Angelo, the boat of the condemned; but the impetuosity of his mind bursts out even in the adoption of this image, he has not stopped at the scowling ferryman of the one, nor at the sweeping blow and demon dragging of the other, but, seized Hylas-likeby the limbs, and tearing up the earth in his agony, the victim is dashed into his destruction; nor is it the sluggish Lethe, nor the fiery lake that bears the cursed vessel, but the oceans of theearth and the waters of the firmament gathered into one white, ghastly cataract, the river of the wrath of God, roaring down into the gulf where the world has melted with its fervent heat, choked with the ruin of nations, and the limbs of its corpses tossed out of its whirling, like water-wheels. Bat like, out of the holes and caverns and shadows of the earth, the bones gather, and the clay heaps heave, rattling and adhering into half-kneaded anatomies, that crawl, and startle, and struggle up among the putrid weeds, with the clay clinging to their clotted hair, and their heavy eyes sealed by the earth darkness yet, like his of old who went his way unseeing to Siloam Pool; shaking off one by one the dreams of the prison-house, hardly hearing the clangor of the trumpets of the armies of God, blinded yet more, as they awake, by the white light of the new Heaven, until the great vortex of the four winds bears up their bodies to the judgment seat: the firmament is all full of them, a very dust of human souls, that drifts, and floats, and falls in the interminable, inevitable light; the bright clouds are darkened with them as with thick snow, currents of atom life in the arteries of heaven, now soaring up slowly, farther, and higher, and higher still, till the eye and the thought can follow no farther, borne up, wingless, by their inward faith and by the angel powers invisible, now hurled in countless drifts of horror before the breath of their condemnation.

§ 25. The imaginative verity, how distinguished from realism.

Now, I wish the reader particularly to observe throughout all these works of Tintoret, the distinction of the imaginative verity from falsehood on the one hand, and from realism on the other. The power of

of every picture depends on the penetration of the imagination into the TRUE nature of the thing represented, and on the utter scorn of the imagination for all shackles and fetters of mere external fact that stand in the way of its suggestiveness. In the Baptism it cuts away the trunks of trees as if they were so much cloud or vapor, that it may exhibit to the thought the completed sequency of the scene;* in the Massacre, it covers the marble floor with visionary light, that it may strike terror into the spectator without condescending to butchery; it defies the bare fact, but creates in him the fearful feeling; in the Crucifixion it annihilates locality, and brings the palm-leaves to Calvary, so only that it may bear the mind to the mount of Olives, as in the entombment it brings the manger to Jerusalem, that it may take the heart to Bethlehem; and all this it does in the daring consciousness of its higher and spiritual verity, and in the entire knowledge of the fact and substance of all that it touches. The imaginary boat of the demon angel expands the rush of the visible river into the descent of irresistible condemnation; but to make that rush and roar felt by the eye and heard by the ear, the rending of the pine branches above the cataract is taken directly from nature; it is an abstract of Alpine storm. Hence while we are always placed face to face with whatever is to be told, there is in and beyond its reality a voice supernatural; and that which is doubtful in the vision has strength, sinew, and assuredness, built up in it by fact.

§ 26. The imagination how manifested in sculpture.

Let us, however, still advance one step farther, and observe the imaginative power deprived of all aid from chiaroscuro, color, or any other means of concealing the frame-work of its thoughts.

It was said by Michael Angelo that "non ha l'ottimo scultore alcun concetto, Ch'un marmo solo in se non circoscriva," a sentence which, though in the immediate sense intended by the writer it may remind us a little of the indignation of Boileau's Pluto, "Il s'ensuit de la que tout ce qui se peut dire de beau, est dans les dictionnaires,—il n'y a que les paroles qui sont transposèes," yet is valuable, because it shows us that Michael Angelo

* The same thing is done yet more boldly in the large composition of the ceiling; the plague of fiery serpents; a part of the host, and another sky horizon are seen through an opening in the ground.

held the imagination to be entirely expressible in rock, and therefore altogether independent, in its own nature, of those aids of color and shade by which it is recommended in Tintoret, though the sphere of its operation is of course by these incalculably extended. But the presence of the imagination may be rendered in marble as deep, thrilling, and awful as in painting, so that the sculptor seek for the soul and govern the body thereby.

§ 27. Bandinelli, Canova, Mino da Fiesole.

Of unimaginative work, Bandinelli and Canova supply us with characteristic instances of every kind, the Hercules and Cacus of the former, and its criticism by Cellini, will occur at once to every one; the disgusting statue now placed so as to conceal Giotto's important tempera picture in Santa Croce is a better instance, but a still more impressive lesson might be received by comparing the inanity of Canova's garland grace, and ball-room sentiment with the intense truth, tenderness, and power of men like Mino da Fiesole, whose chisel leaves many a hard edge, and despises down and dimple, but it seems to cut light and carve breath, the marble burns beneath it, and becomes transparent with very spirit. Yet Mino stopped at the human nature; he saw the soul, but not the ghostly presences about it; it was reserved for Michael Angelo to pierce deeper yet, and to see the indwelling angels. No man's soul is alone: Laocoon or Tobit, the serpent has it by the heart or the angel by the hand, the light or the fear of the spiritual things that move beside it may be seen on the body; and that bodily form with Buonaroti, white, solid, distinct material, though it be, is invariably felt as the instrument or the habitation of some infinite, invisible power. The earth of the Sistine Adam that begins to burn; the woman embodied burst of adoration from his sleep; the twelve great torrents of the Spirit of God that pause above us there, urned in their vessels of clay; the waiting in the shadow of futurity of those through whom the promise and presence of God went down from the Eve to the Mary, each still and fixed, fixed in his expectation, silent, foreseeing, faithful, seated each on his stony throne, the building stones of the word of God, building on and on, tier by tier, to the Refused one, the head of the corner; not only these, not only the troops of terror torn up from the earth by the four quartered winds of the Judgment, but every fragment and atom of stone

§ 28. Michael Angelo.

that he ever touched became instantly inhabited by what makes the hair stand up and the words be few; the St. Matthew, not yet disengaged from his sepulchre, bound hand and foot by his grave clothes, it is left for us to loose him; the strange spectral wreath of the Florence Pieta, casting its pyramidal, distorted shadow, full of pain and death, among the faint purple lights that cross and perish under the obscure dome of St^a. Maria del Fiore, the white lassitude of joyous limbs, panther like, yet passive, fainting with their own delight, that gleam among the Pagan formalisms of the Uffizii, far away, showing themselves in their lustrous lightness as the waves of an Alpine torrent do by their dancing among the dead stones, though the stones be as white as they:* and finally, and perhaps more than all, those four ineffable types, not of darkness nor of day—not of morning nor evening, but of the departure and the resurrection, the twilight and the dawn of the souls of men—together with the spectre sitting in the shadow of the niche above them;† all these, and all else that I

* The Bacchus. There is a small statue opposite it also—unfinished; but "a spirit still."

† I would have insisted more on the ghostly vitality of this dreadful statue; but the passage referring to it in Rogers's Italy supersedes all further description. I suppose most lovers of art know it by heart.

"Nor then forget that chamber of the dead,
Where the gigantic shapes of Night and Day,
Turned into stone, rest everlastingly;
Yet still are breathing, and shed round at noon
A twofold influence,—only to be felt—
A light, a darkness, mingling each with each;
Both, and yet neither. There, from age to age,
Two ghosts are sitting on their sepulchres.
That is the Duke Lorenzo. Mark him well.
He meditates, his head upon his hand.
What from beneath his helm-like bonnet scowls?
Is it a face, or but an eyeless skull?
'Tis lost in shade; yet, like the basilisk,
It fascinates, and is intolerable.
His mien is noble, most majestical!
Then most so, when the distant choir is heard
At morn or eve—nor fail thou to attend
On that thrice-hallowed day, when all are there;
When all, propitiating with solemn songs,
Visit the Dead. Then wilt thou feel his power!

It is strange that this should be the only written instance (as far as I recol-

could name of his forming, have borne, and in themselves retain and exercise the same inexplicable power—inexplicable because proceeding from an imaginative perception almost superhuman, which goes whither we cannot follow, and is where we cannot come; throwing naked the final, deepest root of the being of man, whereby he grows out of the invisible, and holds on his God home.*

lect) of just and entire appreciation of Michael Angelo's spiritual power. It is perhaps owing to the very intensity of his imagination that he has been so little understood—for, as I before said, imagination can never be met by vanity, nor without earnestness. His Florentine followers saw in him an anatomist and posture-master—and art was finally destroyed by the influence over admiring idiocy of the greatest mind that art ever inspired.

* I have not chosen to interrupt the argument respecting the essence of the imaginative faculty by any remarks on the execution of the imaginative hand; but we can hardly leave Tintoret and Michael Angelo without some notice of the pre-eminent power of execution exhibited by both of them, in consequence of their vigor and clearness of conception; nor without again warning the lower artist from confounding this velocity of decision and impatience with the velocity of affectation or indolence. Every result of real imagination we have seen to be a truth of some sort; and it is the characteristic of truth to be in some way tangible, seizable, distinguishable, and clear, as it is of falsehood to be obscure, confused, and confusing. Not but that many, if not most truths have a dark side, a side by which they are connected with mysteries too high for us,—nay, I think it is commonly but a poor and miserable truth which the human mind can walk all round, but at all events they have one side by which we can lay hold of them, and feel that they are downright adamant, and that their form, though lost in cloud here and there, is unalterable and real, and not less real and rocky because infinite, and joined on, St. Michael's mount-like to a far mainland. So then, whatever the real imagination lays hold of, as it is a truth, does not alter into anything else as the imaginative part works at it and feels over it and finds out more of it, but comes out more and more continually, all that is found out pointing to and indicating still more behind, and giving additional stability and reality to that which is discovered already. But if it be fancy or any other form of pseudo-imagination which is at work, then that which it gets hold of may not be a truth, but only an idea, which will keep giving way as soon as we try to take hold of it and turning into something else, so that as we go on copying it, every part will be inconsistent with all that has gone before, and at intervals it will vanish altogether, and leave blanks which must be filled up by any means at hand. And in these circumstances, the painter, unable to seize his thought, because it has not substance nor bone enough to bear grasping, is liable to catch at every line that he lays down, for help and suggestion, and to be led away by it to something else, which the first effort to realize dissipates in like manner, placing another phantom in its stead, until out of the fragments of these successive phantoms he has glued together a vague, mindless,

§ 29. Recapitulation. The perfect function of the imagination is the intuitive perception of ultimate truth.

Now, in all these instances, let it be observed, for it is to that end alone that I have been arguing all along, that the virtue of the imagination is its reaching, by intuition and intensity of gaze, (not by reasoning, but by its authoritative opening and revealing

involuntary whole, a mixture of all that was trite or common in each of the successive conceptions, for that is necessarily what is first caught a heap of things with the bloom off and the chill on, laborious, unnatural, inane, with its emptiness disguised by affectation, and its tastelessness salted by extravagance.

Necessarily, from these modes of conception, three vices of execution must result; and these are necessarily found in all those parts of the work where any trust has been put in conception, and only to be avoided in portions of actual portraiture (for a thoroughly unimaginative painter can make no use of a study—all his studies are guesses and experiments, all are equally wrong, and so far felt to be wrong by himself, that he will not work by any of them, but will always endeavor to improve upon them in the picture, and so lose the use of them.) These three vices of execution are then—first, feebleness of handling, owing to uncertainty of intention; secondly, intentional carelessness of handling, in the hope of getting by accident something more than was meant; and lastly, violence and haste of handling, in the effort to secure as much as possible of the obscure image of which the mind feels itself losing hold. (I am throughout, it will be observed, attributing right feeling to the unimaginative painter; if he lack this, his execution may be cool and determined, as he will set down falsehood without blushing, and ugliness without suffering.) Added to these various evidences of weakness, will be the various vices assumed for the sake of concealment; morbid refinements disguising feebleness —or insolence and coarseness to cover desperation. When the imagination is powerful, the resulting execution is of course the contrary of all this: its first steps will commonly be impetuous, in clearing its ground and getting at its first conception—as we know of Michael Angelo in his smiting his blocks into shape, (see the passage quoted by Sir Charles Clarke in the Essay on Expression, from Blaise de Vigenere,) and as it is visible in the handling of Tintoret always: as the work approaches completion, the stroke, while it remains certain and firm, because its end is always known, may frequently become slow and careful, both on account of the difficulty of following the pure lines of the conception, and because there is no fear felt of the conception's vanishing before it can be realized; but generally there is a certain degree of impetuosity visible in the works of all the men of high imagination, when they are not working from a study, showing itself in Michael Angelo by the number of blocks he left unfinished, and by some slight evidences in those he completed of his having worked painfully towards the close; so that, except the Duke Lorenzo, the Bacchus of the Florentine gallery, and the Pieta of Genoa, I know not any of his finished works in which his mind is as mightily expressed as in his marble sketches; only, it is always to be observed that impetuosity or rudeness of hand is not necessarily—and, if imaginative, is

power,) a more essential truth than is seen at the surface of things. I repeat that it matters not whether the reader is willing to call this faculty imagination or no, I do not care about the name; but I would be understood when I speak of imagination hereafter, to mean this, the true foundation of all art which exercises eternal authority over men's minds; (all other imagination than this is either secondary and contemplative, or utterly spurious;) the base of whose authority and being is its perpetual thirst of truth and purpose to be true. It has no food, no delight, no care, no perception, except of truth; it is forever looking under masks, and burning up mists; no fairness of form, no majesty of seeming will satisfy it; the first condition of its existence is incapability of being deceived; and though it sometimes dwells upon and substantiates the fictions of fancy, yet its own operation is to trace to their farthest limit the true laws and likelihoods even of the fictitious creation. This has been well

never—carelessness. In the two landscapes at the end of the Scuola di San Rocco, Tintoret has drawn several large tree trunks with two strokes of his brush—one for the dark, and another for the light side; and the large rock at the foot of the picture of the Temptation is painted with a few detached touches of gray over a flat brown ground; but the touches of the tree-trunks have been followed by the mind as they went down with the most painful intensity through their every undulation; and the few gray strokes on the stone are so considered that a better stone cone could not be painted if we took a month to it: and I suppose, generally, it would be utterly impossible to give an example of execution in which less was left to accident, or in which more care was concentrated in every stroke, than the seemingly regardless and impetuous handling of this painter.

On the habit of both Tintoret and Michael Angelo to work straightforward from the block and on the canvas, without study or model, it is needless to insist; for though this is one of the most amazing proofs of their imaginative power, it is a dangerous precedent. No mode of execution ought ever to be taught to a young artist as better than another; he ought to understand the truth of what he has to do, felicitous execution will follow as a matter of course; and if he feels himself capable of getting at the right at once, he will naturally do so without reference to precedent. He ought to hold always that his duty is to attain the highest result he can,—but that no one has any business with the means or time he has taken. If it can be done quickly, let it be so done; if not, let it be done at any rate. For knowing his way he is answerable, and therefore must not walk *doubtingly*; but no one can blame him for walking *cautiously*, if the way be a narrow one, with a slip on each side. He may pause, but he must not hesitate,—and tremble, but must not vacillate.

explained by Fuseli, in his allusion to the Centaur of Zeuxis; and there is not perhaps a greater exertion of imaginative power than may be manifested in following out to their farthest limits the necessary consequences of such arbitrary combination; but let not the jests of the fancy be confounded with that after serious work of the imagination which gives them all the nervous verity and substance of which they are capable. Let not the monsters of Chinese earthenware be confounded with the Faun, Satyr, or Centaur.

§ 30. Imagination how vulgarly understood.

How different this definition of the imagination may be from the idea of it commonly entertained among us, I can hardly say, because I have a very indistinct idea of what is usually meant by the term. I hear modern works constantly praised as being imaginative, in which I can trace no virtue of any kind; but simple, slavish, unpalliated falsehood and exaggeration; I see not what merit there can be in pure, ugly, resolute fiction; it is surely easy enough to be wrong; there are many ways of being unlike nature. I understand not what virtue that is which entitles one of these ways to be called imaginative, rather than another; and I am still farther embarrassed by hearing the portions of those works called especially imaginative in which there is the most effort at minute and mechanical statement of contemptible details, and in which the artist would have been as actual and absolute in imitation as an echo, if he had known how. Against convictions which I do not understand, I cannot argue; but I may warn the artist that imagination of this strange kind, is not capable of bearing the time test; nothing of its doing ever has continued its influence over men; and if he desires to take place among the great men of older time, there is but one way for it; and one kind of imagination that will stand the immortal light: I know not how far it is by effort cultivable; but we have evidence enough before us to show in what direction that effort must be made.

§ 31. How its cultivation is dependent on the moral feelings.

We have seen (§ 10) that the imagination is in no small degree dependent on acuteness of moral emotion; in fact, all moral truth can only thus be apprehended—and it is observable, generally, that all true and deep emotion is imaginative, both in conception and expression; and that the mental sight becomes sharper with every full

beat of the heart; and, therefore, all egotism, and selfish care, or regard, are in proportion to their constancy, destructive of imagination; whose play and power depend altogether on our being able to forget ourselves and enter like possessing spirits into the bodies of things about us.

§ 32. On independence of mind,

Again, as the life of imagination is in the discovering of truth, it is clear it can have no respect for sayings or opinions: knowing in itself when it has invented truly—restless and tormented except when it has this knowledge, its sense of success or failure is too acute to be affected by praise or blame. Sympathy it desires—but can do without; of opinions it is regardless, not in pride, but because it has no vanity, and is conscious of a rule of action and object of aim in which it cannot be mistaken; partly, also, in pure energy of desire and longing to do and to invent more and more, which suffer it not to suck the sweetness of praise—unless a little, with the end of the rod in its hand, and without pausing in its march. It goes straight forward up the hill; no voices nor mutterings can turn it back, nor petrify it from its purpose.*

§ 33. And on habitual reference to nature

Finally, it is evident, that like the theoretic faculty, the imagination must be fed constantly by external nature—after the illustrations we have given, this may seem mere truism, for it is clear that to the exercise of the penetrative faculty a subject of penetration is necessary; but I note it because many painters of powerful mind have been lost to the world by their suffering the restless writhing of their imagination in its cage to take place of its healthy and exulting activity in the fields of nature. The most imaginative men always study the hardest, and are the most thirsty for new knowledge. Fancy plays like a squirrel in its circular prison, and is happy; but imagination is a pilgrim on the earth—and her home is in heaven. Shut her from the fields of the celestial mountains—bar her from breathing their lofty, sun-warmed air; and we may as well turn upon her the last bolt of the tower of famine, and give the keys to the keeping of the wildest surge that washes Capraja and Gorgona.

* That which we know of the lives of M. Angelo and Tintoret is eminently illustrative of this temper.

CHAPTER IV.

OF IMAGINATION CONTEMPLATIVE.

§ 1. Imagination contemplative is not part of the essence, but only a habit or mode of the faculty.

We have, in the two preceding chapters, arrived at definite conclusions respecting the power and essence of the imaginative faculty. In these two acts of penetration and combination, its separating and characteristic attributes are entirely developed; it remains for us only to observe a certain habit or mode of operation in which it frequently delights, and by which it addresses itself to our perceptions more forcibly, and asserts its presence more distinctly than in those mighty but more secret workings wherein its life consists.

In our examination of the combining imagination, we chose to assume the first or simple conception to be as clear in the absence as in the presence of the object of it. This, I suppose, is in point of fact never the case, nor is an approximation to such distinctness of conception always a characteristic of the imaginative mind. Many persons have thorough and felicitous power of drawing from memory, yet never originate a thought, nor excite an emotion.

§ 2. The ambiguity of conception.

The form in which conception actually occurs to ordinary minds appears to derive value and preciousness from that indefiniteness which we alluded to in the second chapter, (§ 2,) for there is an unfailing charm in the memory and anticipation of things beautiful, more sunny and spiritual than attaches to their presence; for with their presence it is possible to be sated, and even wearied, but with the imagination of them never; in so far that it needs some self-discipline to prevent the mind from falling into a morbid condition of dissatisfaction with all that it immediately possesses, and continual longing for things absent; and yet I think this charm is not justly to be attributed to the mere vagueness and uncertainty of the

conception, except thus far, that of objects whose substantial presence was ugly or painful the sublimity and impressiveness, if there were any, is retained in the conception, while the sensual offensiveness is withdrawn; thus circumstances of horror may be safely touched in verbal description, and for a time dwelt upon by the mind, as often by Homer and Spenser, (by the latter frequently with too much grossness, as in the description of the combat of the Red-Cross Knight with Errour,) which could not for a moment be regarded or tolerated in their reality, or on canvas; and besides this mellowing and softening operation on those it retains, the conceptive faculty has the power of letting go many of them altogether out of its groups of ideas, and retaining only those where the meminisse juvabit will apply; and in this way the entire group of memories becomes altogether delightful; but of those parts of anything which are in themselves beautiful, I think the indistinctness no benefit, but that the brighter they are the better; and that the peculiar charm we feel in conception results from its grasp and blending of ideas rather than from their obscurity, for we do not usually recall, as we have seen, one part at a time only of a pleasant scene, one moment only of a happy day; but together with each single object we summon up a kind of crowded and involved shadowing forth of all the other glories with which it was associated, and into every moment we concentrate an epitome of the day; and it will happen frequently that even when the visible objects or actual circumstances are not in numbers remembered; yet the feeling and joy of them is obtained we know not how or whence, and so with a kind of conceptive burning glass we bend the sunshine of all the day, and the fulness of all the scene upon every point that we successively seize; and this together with more vivid action of fancy, for I think that the wilful and playful seizure of the points that suit her purpose, and help her springing, whereby she is distinguished from simple conception, takes place more easily and actively with the memory of things than in presence of them. But, however this be, and I confess that there is much that I cannot satisfactorily to myself unravel with respect to the nature of simple conception; it is evident that this agreeableness, whatever it be, is not by art attainable, for all art is in some sort realization; it may be the

§ 8. Is not in itself capable of adding to the charm of fair things.

realization of obscurity or indefiniteness, but still it must differ from the mere conception of obscurity and indefiniteness; so that whatever emotions depend absolutely on imperfectness of conception, as the horror of Milton's Death, cannot be rendered by art, for art can only lay hold of things which have shape, and destroys by its touch the fearfulness or pleasurableness of those which shape have none.

§ 4. But gives to the imagination its regardant power over them.

But on this indistinctness of conception, itself comparatively valueless and unaffecting, is based the operation of the imaginative faculty with which we are at present concerned, and in which its glory is consummated; whereby, depriving the subject of material and bodily shape, and regarding such of its qualities only as it chooses for particular purpose, it forges these qualities together in such groups and forms as it desires, and gives to their abstract being consistency and reality, by striking them as it were with the die of an image belonging to other matter, which stroke having once received, they pass current at once in the peculiar conjunction and for the peculiar value desired.

Thus, in the description of Satan quoted in the first chapter, "And like a comet burned," the bodily shape of the angel is destroyed, the inflaming of the formless spirit is alone regarded; and this, and his power of evil associated in one fearful and abstract conception are stamped to give them distinctness and permanence with the image of the comet, "that fires the length of Ophiuchus huge." Yet this could not be done, but that the image of the comet itself is in a measure indistinct, capable of awful expansion, and full of threatening and fear. Again, in his fall, the imagination binds up the thunder, the resistance, the massy prostration, separates them from the external form, and binds them together by the help of that image of the mountain half sunk; which again would be unfit but for its own indistinctness, and for that glorious addition "with all his pines," whereby a vitality and spear-like hostility are communicated to its falling form, and the fall is marked as not utter subversion, but sinking only, the pines remaining in their uprightness, and unity, and threatening of darkness upon the descended precipice: and again in that yet more noble passage at the close of the fourth book, where almost every operation of the contemplative imagination is

concentrated; the angelic squadron first gathered into one burning mass by the single expression "sharpening in mooned horns," then told out in their unity and multitude and stooped hostility, by the image of the wind upon the corn; Satan endowed with godlike strength and endurance in that mighty line, "like Teneriffe or Atlas, unremoved," with infinitude of size the next instant, and with all the vagueness and terribleness of spiritual power, by the "horror plumed," and the "*what seemed* both spear and shield."

§ 5. The third office of fancy distinguished from imagination contemplative.

The third function of fancy, already spoken of as subordinate to this of the imagination, is the highest of which she is capable; like the imagination, she beholds in the things submitted to her treatment things different from the actual; but the suggestions she follows are not in their nature essential in the object contemplated; and the images resulting, instead of illustrating, may lead the mind away from it, and change the current of contemplative feeling; for as in her operation parallel to imagination penetrative, we saw her dwelling upon external features, while the nobler sister, faculty, entered within, so now, when both, from what they see and know in their immediate object, are conjuring up images illustrative or elevatory of it, the fancy necessarily summons those of mere external relationship, and therefore of unaffecting influence; while the imagination, by every ghost she raises, tells tales about the prison-house, and therefore never loses her power over the heart, nor her unity of emotion. On the other hand, the regardant or contemplative action of fancy is in this different from, and in this nobler, than that mere seizing and likeness-catching operation we saw in her before; that when contemplative, she verily believes in the truth of the vision she has summoned, loses sight of actuality, and beholds the new and spiritual image faithfully and even seriously; whereas before, she summoned no spiritual image, but merely caught the vivid actuality, or the curious resemblance of the real object; not that these two operations are separate, for the fancy passes gradually from mere vivid right of reality, and witty suggestion of likeness, to a ghostly sight of what is unreal; and through this, in proportion as she begins to feel, she rises towards and partakes of imagination itself, for imagination and fancy are continually united, and it is necessary, when they are so, care

fully to distinguish the feelingless part which is fancy's, from the sentient part, which is imagination's. Let us take a few instances. Here is fancy, first, very beautiful, in her simple capacity of likeness-catching:—

> "To-day we purpose—aye, this hour we mount
> To spur three leagues towards the Apennine.
> Come down, we pray thee, ere the *hot sun count*
> *His dewy rosary* on the eglantine."

Seizing on the outside resemblances of bead form, and on the slipping from their threading bough one by one, the fancy is content to lose the heart of the thing, the solemnity of prayer: or perhaps I do the glorious poet wrong in saying this, for the sense of a sun worship and orison in beginning its race, may have been in his mind; and so far as it was so, the passage is imaginative and not fanciful. But that which most readers would accept from it, is the mere flash of the external image, in whose truth the fancy herself does not yet believe, and therefore is not yet contemplative. Here, however, is fancy believing in the images she creates:—

> "It feeds the quick growth of the serpent-vine,
> And the dark linked ivy tangling wild
> And budding, blown, or odor faded blooms,
> Which *star the winds with points of colored light*
> As they rain through them; and *bright golden globes*
> *Of fruit suspended in their own green heaven.*"

It is not, observe, a mere likeness that is caught here; but the flowers and fruit are entirely deprived by the fancy of their material existence, and contemplated by her seriously and faithfully as stars and worlds; yet it is only external likeness that she catches; she forces the resemblance, and lowers the dignity of the adopted image.

Next take two delicious stanzas of fancy regardant, (believing in her creations,) followed by one of heavenly imagination, from Wordsworth's address to the daisy:—

> "A Nun demure—of lowly port;
> Or sprightly maiden—of Love's court,
> In thy simplicity the sport
> Of all temptations.
> A Queen in crown of rubies drest,
> A starveling in a scanty vest,

Are all as seems to suit thee best,—
Thy appellations.

I see thee glittering from afar,
And then thou art a pretty star,—
Not quite so fair as many are
In heaven above thee.
Yet like a star, with glittering crest,
Self-poised in air thou seem'st to rest;—
May peace come never to his nest
Who shall reprove thee.

Sweet flower—for by that name at last,
When all my reveries are past,
I call thee, and to that cleave fast.
Sweet silent creature,
That breath'st with me, in sun and air,
Do thou, as thou art wont, repair
My heart with gladness, and a share
Of thy meek nature."

§ 6. Various instances.

Observe how spiritual, yet how wandering and playful the fancy is in the first two stanzas, and how far she flies from the matter in hand, never stopping to brood on the character of any one of the images she summons, and yet for a moment truly seeing and believing in them all; while in the last stanza the imagination returns with its deep feeling to the heart of the flower, and "*cleaves fast*" to that. Compare the operation of the imagination in Coleridge, on one of the most trifling objects that could possibly have been submitted to its action.

"The thin blue flame
Lies on my low-burnt fire, and quivers not:
Only that film which fluttered on the grate
Still flutters there, the sole unquiet thing.
Methinks its motion in this hush of nature
Gives it dim sympathies with me, who live,
Making it a companionable form,
Whose puny flaps and freaks the idling spirit
By its own moods interprets; everywhere,
Echo or mirror seeking of itself,
And makes a toy of thought."

Lastly, observe the sweet operation of fancy regardant, in the following well-known passage from Scott, where both her beholding and transforming powers are seen in their simplicity.

"The rocky summits—split and rent,
Formed turret, dome, or battlement.—
Or seemed fantastically set
With cupola or minaret.
Nor were these earth-born castles bare,
Nor lacked they many a banner fair,
For from their shivered brows displayed,
Far o'er th' unfathomable glade,
All twinkling with the dew-drop sheen,
The brier-rose fell, in streamers green,—
And creeping shrubs of thousand dyes
Waved in the west wind's summer sighs."

Let the reader refer to this passage, with its pretty tremulous conclusion above the pine tree, "where glistening streamers waved and danced," and then compare with it the following, where the imagination operates on a scene nearly similar.

"Gray rocks did peep from the spare moss, and stemm'd
The struggling brook; tall spires of windle strae
Threw their thin shadows down the rugged slope,
And nought but knarled roots of ancient pines,
Branchless and blasted, clench'd with grasping roots
Th' unwilling soil . . . . .
. . . . . A gradual change was here,
Yet ghastly. For, *as fast years flow away,*
The smooth brow gathers, and the hair grows thin
And white; and where irradiate dewy eyes
Had shone, gleam stony orbs; so from his steps
Bright flowers departed, and the beautiful shade
Of the green groves, with all their odorous winds
And musical motions. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . Where the pass extends
Its stony jaws, the abrupt mountain breaks,
And seems with its accumulated crags
To overhang the world; for wide expand
Beneath the wan stars, and descending moon,
Islanded seas, blue mountains, mighty streams,
Dim tracts and vast, robed in the lustrous gloom
Of leaden-colored even, and *fiery hills*
Mingling their flames with twilight on the verge
Of the remote horizon. The near scene
In naked, and severe simplicity
Made contrast with the universe. A pine
Rock-rooted, stretch'd athwart the vacancy
Its swinging boughs, to each *inconstant blast*

Yielding one only response at each pause,
In most familiar cadence, with the howl,
The thunder, and the hiss of *homeless* streams,
Mingling its solemn song.

In this last passage, the mind never departs from its solemn possession of the solitary scene, the imagination only giving weight, meaning, and strange human sympathies to all its sights and sounds.

In that from Scott,*—the fancy, led away by the outside resemblance of floating form and hue to the banners, loses the feeling and possession of the scene, and places herself in circumstances of character completely opposite to the quietness and grandeur of the natural objects; this would have been unjustifiable, but that the resemblance occurs to the mind of the monarch, rather than to that of the poet; and it is that, which of all others, would have been the most likely to occur at the time; in this point of view it has high imaginative propriety. Of the same fanciful character is that transformation of the tree trunks into dragons noticed before in Turner's Jason; and in the same way this becomes imaginative as it exhibits the effect of fear in disposing to morbid perception. Compare with it the real and high action of the imagination on the same matter in Wordsworth's Yew trees (which I consider the most vigorous and solemn bit of forest landscape ever painted):—

"Each particular trunk a growth
Of intertwisted fibres serpentine,
Up coiling and inveterately convolved,
Nor uninformed with Phantasy, and looks
That threaten the profane."

It is too long to quote, but the reader should refer to it: let

* Let it not be supposed that I mean to compare the sickly dreaming of Shelly over clouds and waves with the masculine and magnificent grasp of men and things which we find in Scott; it only happens that these two passages are more illustrative, by the likeness of the scenery they treat, than any others I could have opposed; and that Shelly is peculiarly distinguished by the faculty of contemplative imagination. Scott's healthy and truthful feeling would not allow him to represent the benighted hunter provoked by loss of game, horse, and way at once, as indulging in any more exalted flights of imagination than those naturally consequent on the contrast between the night's lodging he expected, and that which befitted him.

him note especially, if painter, that pure touch of color, "by sheddings from the pining umbrage tinged."

In the same way, the blasted trunk on the left, in Turner's drawing of the spot where Harold fell at the battle of Hastings, takes, where its boughs first separate, the shape of the head of an arrow; this, which is mere fancy in itself, is imagination as it supposes in the spectator an excited condition of feeling dependent on the history of the spot.

§ 7. Morbid or nervous fancy.

I have been led perhaps into too great detail in illustrating these points; but I think it is of no small importance to prove how in all cases the imagination is based upon, and appeals to, a deep heart feeling; and how faithful and earnest it is in contemplation of the subject matter, never losing sight of it, or disguising it, but depriving it of extraneous and material accidents, and regarding it in its disembodied essence. I have not, however, sufficiently noted in opposition to it, that diseased action of the fancy which depends more on nervous temperament than intellectual power; and which, as in dreaming, fever, insanity, and other morbid conditions of mind, is frequently a source of daring and inventive conception; and so the visionary appearances resulting from various disturbances of the frame by passion, and from the rapid tendency of the mind to invest with shape and intelligence the active influences about it, as in the various demons, spirits, and fairies of all imaginative nations; which, however, I consider are no more to be ranked as right creations of fancy or imagination than things actually seen and heard; for the action of the nerves is I suppose the same, whether externally caused, or from within, although very grand imagination may be shown by the intellectual anticipation and realization of such impressions; as in that glorious vignette of Turner's to the voyage of Columbus. "Slowly along the evening sky they went." Note especially therein, how admirably true to the natural form, and yet how suggestive of the battlement he has rendered the level flake of evening cloud.

§ 8. The action of contemplative imagination is not to be expressed by art.

I believe that it is unnecessary for me to enter into farther detail of illustration respecting these points; for fuller explanation of the operations of the contemplative faculty on things verbally expressible, the reader may be referred to Wordsworth's preface to his poems; it

only remains for us, here, to examine how far this imaginative or abstract conception is to be conveyed by the material art of the sculptor or the painter.

Now, it is evident that the bold action of either the fancy or the imagination, dependent on a bodiless and spiritual image of the object, is not to be by lines or colors represented. We cannot, in the painting of Satan fallen, suggest any image of pines or crags, —neither can we assimilate the brier and the banner, nor give human sympathy to the motion of the film, nor voice to the swinging of the pines.

§ 9. Except under narrow limits.—1st. Abstract rendering of form without color.

Yet certain powers there are, within due limits, of marking the thing represented with an ideal character; and it was to these powers that I alluded in defining the meaning of the term ideal, in the thirteenth chapter of the preceding section. For it is by this operation that the productions of high art are separated from those of the realist.

And, first, there is evidently capability of separating color and form, and considering either separately. Form we find abstractedly considered by the sculptor, how far it would be possible to advantage a statue by the addition of color, I venture not to affirm; the question is too extensive to be here discussed. High authorities and ancient practice, are in favor of color; so the sculpture of the middle ages: the two statues of Mino da Fiesole in the church of St^a. Caterina at Pisa have been colored, the irises of the eyes painted dark, and the hair gilded, as also I think the Madonna in St^a. Maria della Spina; the eyes have been painted in the sculptures of Orcagna in Or San Michele, but it looks like a remnant of barbarism, (compare the pulpit of Guida da Como, in the church of San Bartolomeo at Pistoja,) and I have never seen color on any solid forms, that did not, to my mind, neutralize all other power; the porcelains of Luca della Robbia are painful examples, and in lower art, Florentine mosaic in relief; gilding is more admissible, and tells sometimes sweetly upon figures of quaint design, as on the pulpit of St^a. Maria Novella, while it spoils the classical ornaments of the mouldings. But the truest grandeur of sculpture I believe to be in the white form; something of this feeling may be owing to the difficulty, or rather the immediately, of obtaining truly noble color upon it, but if we

could color the Elgin marbles with the flesh tint of Giorgione, I had rather not have it done.

§ 10. Of color without form.

Color, without form, is less frequently obtainable; and it may be doubted whether it be desirable: yet I think that to the full enjoyment of it, a certain abandonment of form is necessary; sometimes by reducing it to the shapeless glitter of the gem, as often Tintoret and Bassano; sometimes by loss of outline and blending of parts, as Turner; sometimes by flatness of mass, as often Giorgione and Titian. How far it is possible for the painter to represent those mountains of Shelley as the poet sees them, "mingling *their flames* with twilight," I cannot say; but my impression is, that there is no true abstract mode of considering color; and that all the loss of form in the works of Titian or Turner, is not ideal, but the representation of the natural conditions under which bright color is seen; for form is always in a measure lost by nature herself when color is very vivid.

§ 11. Or of both without texture.

Again, there is capability of representing the essential character, form, and color of an object, without external texture. On this point much has been said by Reynolds and others, and it is, indeed, perhaps the most unfailing characteristic of great manner in painting. Compare a dog of Edwin Landseer with a dog of Paul Veronese. In the first, the outward texture is wrought out with exquisite dexterity of handling, and minute attention to all the accidents of curl and gloss which can give appearance of reality, while the hue and power of the sunshine, and the truth of the shadow on all these forms is necessarily neglected, and the large relations of the animal as a mass of color to the sky or ground, or other parts of the picture, utterly lost. This is realism at the expense of ideality, it is treatment essentially unimaginative.* With Veronese, there is no curling nor crisping, no glossiness nor sparkle, hardly even hair; a mere type of hide, laid on with a few scene-painter's touches. But the essence of dog is there, the entire magnificent, generic

* I do not mean to withdraw the praise I have given, and shall always be willing to give such pictures as the Old Shepherd's Chief Mourner, and to all in which the character and inner life of animals are developed. But all lovers of art must regret to find Mr. Landseer wasting his energies on such inanities as the "Shoeing," and sacrificing color, expression, and action, to an imitation of glossy hide.

animal type, muscular and living, and with broad, pure, sunny daylight upon him, and bearing his true and harmonious relation of color to all color about him. This is ideal treatment.

The same treatment is found in the works of all the greatest men, they all paint the lion more than his mane, and the horse rather than his hide; and I think also they are more careful to obtain the right expression of large and universal light and color, than local tints; for the warmth of sunshine, and the force of sunlighted hue are always sublime on whatever subject they may be exhibited; and so also are light and shade, if grandly arranged, as may be well seen in an etching of Rembrandt's of a spotted shell, which he has made altogether sublime by broad truth and large ideality of light and shade; and so I have seen frequent instances of very grand ideality in treatment of the most commonplace still life, by our own Hunt, where the petty glosses and delicacies, and minor forms, are all merged in a broad glow of suffused color; so also in pieces of the same kind by Etty, where, however, though the richness and play of color are greater, and the arrangement grander, there is less expression of light, neither is there anything in modern art that can be set beside some choice passages of Hunt in this respect.

§ 12. Abstraction or typical representation of animal form.

Again, it is possible to represent objects capable of various accidents in a generic or symbolical form.

How far this may be done with things having necessary form, as animals, I am not prepared to say. The lions of the Egyptian room in the British Museum, and the fish beside Michael Angelo's Jonah, are instances; and there is imaginative power about both which we find not in the more perfectly realized Florentine boar, nor in Raffaelle's fish of the draught. And yet the propriety and nobility of these types depend on the architectural use and character of the one, and on the typical meaning of the other: we should be grieved to see the forms of the Egyptian lion substituted for those of Raffaelle's in its struggle with Samson, nor would the whale of Michael Angelo be tolerated in the nets of Gennesaret. So that I think it is only when the figure of the creature stands not for any representation of vitality, but merely for a letter or type of certain symbolical meaning, or else is adopted as a grand form of decoration or support in architecture, that such generalization is allowable, and in such circum-

stances I think it necessary, always provided it be based, as in the instances given I conceive it to be, upon thorough knowledge of the creature symbolized and wrought out by a master hand; and these conditions being observed, I believe it to be right and necessary in architecture to modify all animal forms by a severe architectural stamp, and in symbolical use of them, to adopt a typical form, to which practice the contrary, and its evil consequences are ludicrously exhibited in the St. Peter of Carlo Dolci in the Pitti palace, which owing to the prominent, glossy-plumed and crimson-combed cock, is liable to be taken for the portrait of a poulterer, only let it be observed that the treatment of the animal form here is offensive, not only from its realization, but from the pettiness and meanness of its realization; for it might, in other hands but Carlo Dolci's, have been a sublime cock, though a real one, but in his, it is fit for nothing but the spit. Compare as an example partly of symbolical treatment, partly of magnificent realization, that supernatural lion of Tintoret, in the picture of the Doge Loredano before the Madonna, with the plumes of his mighty wings clashed together in cloudlike repose, and the strength of the sea winds shut within their folding. And note farther the difference between the typical use of the animal, as in this case, and that of the fish of Jonah, (and again the fish before mentioned whose form is indicated in the clouds of the baptism,) and the actual occurrence of the creature itself, with concealed meaning, as the ass colt of the crucifixion, which it was necessary to paint as such, and not as an ideal form.

§ 13. Either when it is symbolically used,

I cannot enter here into the question of the exact degree of severity and abstraction necessary in the forms of living things architecturally employed; my own feeling on the subject is, though I dare not lay it down as a principle, (with the Parthenon pediment standing against me like the shield of Ajax,) that no perfect representation of animal form is right in architectural decoration. For my own part, I had much rather see the metopes in the Elgin room of the British Museum, and the Parthenon without them, than have them together, and I would not surrender, in an architectural point of view, one mighty line of the colossal, quiet, life-in-death statue mountains in Egypt with their narrow fixed eyes and hands on their rocky limbs, nor one Romanesque façade with its porphyry mosaic of indefinable

§ 14. Or in architectural decoration.

monsters, nor one Gothic moulding of rigid saints and grinning goblins, for ten Parthenons; and, I believe, I could show some rational ground for this seeming barbarity if this were the place to do so, but at present I can only ask the reader to compare the effect of the so-called barbarous ancient mosaics on the front of St. Mark's, as they have been recorded, happily, by the faithfulness of the good Gentile Bellini, in one of his pictures now in the Venice gallery, with the veritably barbarous pictorial substitutions of the fifteenth century, (one only of the old mosaics remains, or did remain till lately, over the northern door, but it is probably by this time torn down by some of the Venetian committees of taste,) and also I would have the old portions of the interior ceiling, or of the mosaics of Murano and Torcello, and the glorious Cimabue mosaic of Pisa, and the roof of the Baptistery at Parma, (that of the Florence Baptistery is a bad example, owing to its crude whites and complicated mosaic of small forms,) all of which are as barbarous as they can well be, in a certain sense, but mighty in their barbarism, with any architectural decorations whatsoever, consisting of professedly perfect animal forms, from the vile frescoes of Federigo Zuccaro at Florence to the ceiling of the Sistine, and again compare the professedly perfect sculpture of Milan Cathedral with the statues of the porches of Chartres; only be it always observed that it is not rudeness and ignorance of art, but intellectually awful abstraction that I uphold, and also be it noted that in all ornament, which takes place in the general effect merely as so much fretted stone, in capitals and other pieces of minute detail, the forms may be, and perhaps ought to be, elaborately imitative; and in this respect again the capitals of St. Mark's church, and of the Doge's palace at Venice may be an example to the architects of all the world, in their boundless inventiveness, unfailing elegance, and elaborate finish; there is more mind poured out in turning a single angle of that church than would serve to build a modern cathedral;* and of the careful finish of the work, this may serve

§ 15. Exception in delicate and superimposed ornament.

* I have not brought forward any instances of the imaginative power in architecture, as my object is not at present to exhibit its operation in all matter, but only to define its essence; but it may be well to note, in our own new houses of Parliament, how far a building approved by a committee of Taste may proceed without manifestation either of imagination or composition: it

for example, that one of the capitals of the Doge's palace is formed of eight heads of different animals, of which one is a bear's with a honeycomb in the mouth, whose carved *cells* are *hexagonal*.

§ 16. Abstraction necessary from imperfection of materials.

So far, then, of the abstraction proper to architecture, and to symbolical uses, of which I shall have occasion to speak hereafter at length, referring to it only at present as one of the operations of imagination contemplative; other abstractions there are which are necessarily consequent on the imperfection of materials, as of the hair in sculpture, which is necessarily treated in masses that are in no sort imitative, but only stand for hair, and have the grace, flow, and feeling of it without the texture or division, and other abstractions there are in which the form of one thing is fancifully indicated in the matter of another; as in phantoms and cloud shapes, the use of which, in mighty hands, is often most impressive, as in the cloudy charioted Apollo of Nicolo Poussin in our own gallery, which the reader may oppose to the substantial Apollo, in Wilson's Niobe, and again the phantom vignette of Turner already noticed; only such operations of the imagination are to be held of lower kind and dangerous consequence, if frequently trusted in, for those painters only have the right imaginative power who can set the supernatural form before us fleshed and boned like ourselves.* Other abstractions occur, frequently, of things which have much accidental variety of form, as of waves, on Greek sculptures in successive volutes, and of clouds often in supporting volumes in the sacred pictures; but these I do not look upon as results of imagination at all, but mere signs and letters; and whenever a very highly imaginative mind touches them, it always realizes as far as may be. Even Titian is content to use at the top of his St. Pietro Martiri, the conventional, round, opaque cloud, which cuts his trees open like a gouge; but Tintoret, in his picture of the Golden Calf,

§ 17. Abstractions of things capable of varied accident are not imaginative.

remains to be seen how far the towers may redeem it; and I allude to it at present unwillingly, and only in the desire of influencing, so far as I may, those who have the power to prevent the adoption of a design for a bridge to take place of Westminster, which was exhibited in 1844 at the Royal Academy, professing to be in harmony with the new building, but which was fit only to carry a railroad over a canal.

* Comp. Ch. V. § 5.

though compelled to represent the Sinai under conventional form, in order that the receiving of the tables might be seen at the top of it, yet so soon as it is possible to give more truth, he is ready with it; he takes a grand fold of horizontal cloud straight from the flanks of the Alps, and shows the forests of the mountains through its misty volume, like sea-weed through deep sea.* Nevertheless when the realization is impossible, bold symbolism is of the highest value, and in religious art, as we shall presently see, even necessary, as of the rays of light in the Titian woodcut of St. Francis before noticed; and sometimes the attention is directed by some such strange form to the meaning of the image, which may be missed if it remains in its natural purity, (as, I suppose, few in looking at the Cephalus and Procris of Turner, note the sympathy of those faint rays that are just drawing back and dying between the trunks of the far-off forest, with the ebbing life of the nymph; unless, indeed, they happen to recollect the same sympathy marked by Shelley in the Alastor;) but the imagination is not shown in any such modifications; however, in some cases they may be valuable (in the Cephalus they would be utterly destructive,) and I note them merely in consequence of their peculiar use in religious art, presently to be examined.

§ 18. Yet sometimes valuable.

The last mode we have here to note in which the imagination regardant may be expressed in art is exaggeration, of which, as it is the vice of all bad artists, and may be constantly resorted to without any warrant of imagination, it is necessary to note strictly the admissible limits.

§ 19. Exaggeration. Its laws and limits. First, in scale of representation.

In the first place, a colossal statue is necessarily no more an exaggeration of what it represents than a miniature is a diminution, it need not be a representation of a giant, but a representation, on a large scale, of a man; only it is to be observed, that as any plane intersecting the cone of rays between us and the object, must receive an image smaller than the object; a small image is rationally and completely expressive of a larger one; but not a large of a small one. Hence I think that all statues above the Elgin standard, or that of Michael Angelo's Night and Morning, are, in a measure, taken by the eye for representations of giants, and I

* All the clouds of Tintoret are sublime; the worst that I know in art are Correggio's, especially in the Madonna della Scudella, and Dome of Parma.

think them always disagreeable. The amount of exaggeration admitted by Michael Angelo is valuable because it separates the emblematic from the human form, and gives greater freedom to the grand lines of the frame; for notice of his scientific system of increase of size I may refer the reader to Sir Charles Bell's remarks on the statues of the Medici chapel; but there is one circumstance which Sir Charles has not noticed, and in the interpretation of which, therefore, it is likely I may be myself wrong; that the extremities are singularly small in proportion to the limbs, by which means there is an expression given of strength and activity greater than in the ordinary human type, which appears to me to be an allowance for that alteration in proportion necessitated by increase of size, of which we took note in Chap. VI. of the first section, § 10., note; not but that Michael Angelo always makes the extremities comparatively small, but smallest, comparatively, in his largest works; so I think, from the size of the head, it may be conjectured respecting the Theseus of the Elgins. Such adaptations are not necessary when the exaggerated image is spectral: for as the laws of matter in that case can have no operation, we may expand the form as far as we choose, only let careful distinction be made between the size of the thing represented, and the scale of the representation. The canvas on which Fuseli has stretched his Satan in the schools of the Royal Academy is a mere concession to inability. He might have made him look more gigantic in one of a foot square.

§ 20. Secondly. Of things capable of variety of scale.

Another kind of exaggeration is of things whose size is variable to a size or degree greater than that usual with them, as in waves and mountains; and there are hardly any limits to this exaggeration so long as the laws which nature observes in her increase be observed. Thus, for instance: the form and polished surface of a breaking ripple three inches high, are not representation of either the form or the surface of the surf of a storm, nodding ten feet above the beach; neither would the cutting ripple of a breeze upon a lake if simply exaggerated, represent the forms of Atlantic surges; but as nature increases her bulk, she diminishes the angles of ascent, and increases her divisions; and if we would represent surges of size greater than ever existed, which it is lawful to do, we must carry out these operations to still greater extent. Thus Turner, in his

picture of the Slave Ship, divides the whole sea into two masses of enormous swell, and conceals the horizon by a gradual slope of only two or three degrees. This is intellectual exaggeration. In the Academy exhibition of 1843, there was, in one of the smaller rooms, a black picture of a storm, in which there appeared on the near sea, just about to be overwhelmed by an enormous breaker, curling right over it, an object at first sight liable to be taken for a walnut shell, but which, on close examination, proved to be a ship with mast and sail, with Christ and his twelve disciples in it. This is childish exaggeration, because it is impossible, by the laws of matter and motion, that such a breaker should ever exist. Again in mountains, we have repeatedly observed the necessary building up and multitudinous division of the higher peaks, and the smallness of the slopes by which they usually rise. We may, therefore, build up the mountain as high as we please, but we must do it in nature's way, and not in impossible peaks and precipices; not but that a daring feature is admissible here and there, as the Matterhorn is admitted by nature; but we must not compose a picture out of such exceptions; we may use them, but they must be as exceptions exhibited. I shall have much to say, when we come to treat of the sublime, of the various modes of treating mountain form, so that at present I shall only point to an unfortunate instance of inexcusable and effectless exaggeration in the distance of Turner's vignette to Milton, (the temptation on the mountain,) and desire the reader to compare it with legitimate exaggeration, in the vignette to the second part of Jacqueline, in Rogers's poems.

§ 21. Thirdly necessary in expression of characteristic features on diminished scale.

Another kind of exaggeration is necessary to retain the characteristic impressions of nature on reduced scale; it is not possible, for instance, to give the leafage of trees in its proper proportion, when the trees represented are large, without entirely losing their grace of form and curvature; of this the best proof is found in the Calotype or Daguerreotype, which fail in foliage, not only because the green rays are ineffective, but because, on the small scale of the image, the reduced leaves lose their organization, and look like moss attached to sticks. In order to retain, therefore, the character of flexibility and beauty of foliage, the painter is often compelled to increase the proportionate size of the leaves, and to arrange them

in generic masses. Of this treatment compare the grand examples throughout the Liber Studiorum. It is by such means only that the ideal character of objects is to be preserved; as we before observed in the 13th chapter of the first section. In all these cases exaggeration is only lawful as the sole means of arriving at truth of impression when strict fidelity is out of the question.

Other modes of exaggeration there are, on which I shall not at present farther insist, the proper place for their discussion being in treating of the sublime, and these which I have at present instanced are enough to establish the point at issue, respecting imaginative verity, inasmuch as we find that exaggeration itself, if imaginative, is referred to principles of truth, and of actual being.

§ 22. Recapitulation.

We have now, I think, reviewed the various modes in which imagination contemplative may be exhibited in art, and arrived at all necessary certainties respecting the essence of the faculty: which we have found in all its three functions, associative of truth, penetrative of truth, and contemplative of truth; and having no dealings nor relations with any kind of falsity. One task, however remains to us, namely, to observe the operation of the theoretic and imaginative faculties together, in the attempt at realization to the bodily sense of beauty supernatural and divine.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE SUPERHUMAN IDEAL.

§ 1. The subject is not to be here treated in detail.

In our investigation in the first section of the laws of beauty, we confined ourselves to the observation of lower nature, or of humanity. We were prevented from proceeding to deduce conclusions respecting divine ideality by our not having then established any principles respecting the imaginative faculty, by which, under the discipline of the theoretic, such ideality is conceived. I had purposed to conclude the present section by a careful examination of this subject; but as this is evidently foreign to the matter immediately under discussion, and involves questions of great intricacy respecting the development of mind among those pagan nations who are supposed to have produced high examples of spiritual ideality, I believe it will be better to delay such inquiries until we have concluded our detailed observation of the beauty of visible nature; and I shall therefore at present take notice only of one or two broad principles, which were referred to, or implied, in the chapter respecting the human ideal, and without the enunciation of which, that chapter might lead to false conclusions.

§ 2. The conceivable modes of manifestation of Spiritual Beings are four.

There are four ways in which beings supernatural may be conceived as manifesting themselves to human sense. The first, by external types, signs, or influences; as God to Moses in the flames of the bush, and to Elijah in the voice of Horeb.

The second, by the assuming of a form not properly belonging to them; as the Holy Spirit of that of a Dove, the second person of the Trinity of that of a Lamb; and so such manifestations, under angelic or other form, of the first person of the Trinity, as seem to have been made to Abraham, Moses, and Ezekiel.

The third, by the manifestation of a form properly belonging to them, but not necessarily seen; as of the Risen Christ to his disci-

ples when the doors were shut. And the fourth, by their operation on the human form, which they influence or inspire, as in the shining of the face of Moses.

§ 3. And these are in or through creature forms familiar to us.

It is evident that in all these cases, wherever there is form at all, it is the form of some creature to us known. It is no new form peculiar to spirit nor can it be. We can conceive of none. Our inquiry is simply, therefore, by what modifications those creature forms to us known, as of a lamb, a bird, or a human creature, may be explained as signs or habitations of Divinity, or of angelic essence, and not creatures such they seem.

§ 4. Supernatural character may be impressed on these either by phenomena inconsistent with their common nature, (compare chap. 4, § 16.)

This may be done in two ways. First, by effecting some change in the appearance of the creature inconsistent with its actual nature, as by giving it colossal size, or unnatural color, or material, as of gold, or silver, or flame, instead of flesh, or by taking away its property of matter altogether, and forming it of light or shade, or in an intermediate step, of cloud, or vapor; or explaining it by terrible concomitant circumstances, as of wounds in the body, or strange lights and seemings round about it; or by joining of two bodies together as in angels' wings. Of all which means of attaining supernatural character (which though, in their nature ordinary and vulgar, are yet effective and very glorious in mighty hands) we have already seen the limits in speaking of the imagination.

§ 5. Or by inherent Dignity.

But the second means of obtaining supernatural character is that with which we are now concerned, namely, retaining the actual form in its full and material presence, and without aid from any external interpretation whatsoever, to raise that form by mere inherent dignity to such a pitch of power and impressiveness as cannot but assert and stamp it for superhuman.

On the north side of the Campo Santo at Pisa, are a series of paintings from the Old Testament History by Benozzo Gozzoli. In the earlier of these, angelic presences, mingled with human, occur frequently, illustrated by no awfulness of light, nor incorporeal tracing. Clear revealed they move, in human forms, in the broad daylight and on the open earth, side by side, and, hand in hand with men. But they never miss of the angel.

He who can do this has reached the last pinnacle and utmost power of ideal, or any other art. He stands in no need, thenceforward, of cloud, nor lightning, nor tempest, nor terror of mystery. His sublime is independent of the elements. It is of that which shall stand when they shall melt with fervent heat, and light the firmament when the sun is as sackcloth of hair.

§ 6. 1st. Of the expression of Inspiration.

Let us consider by what means this has been effected, so far as they are by analysis traceable; and that is not far, for here, as always, we find that the greater part of what has been rightly accomplished has been done by faith and intense feeling, and cannot, by aid of any rules or teaching, be either tried, estimated, or imitated.

And first, of the expression of supernatural influence on forms actually human, as of sibyl or prophet. It is evident that not only here is it unnecessary, but we are not altogether at liberty to trust for expression to the utmost ennobling of the human form: for we cannot do more than this, when that form is to be the actual representation, and not the recipient of divine presence. Hence, in order to retain the actual humanity definitely, we must leave upon it such signs of the operation of sin and the liability to death as are consistent with human ideality, and often more than these, definite signs of immediate and active evil, when the prophetic spirit is to be expressed in men such as were Saul and Balaam: neither may we ever, with just discrimination, touch the utmost limits of beauty in human form when inspiration is to be expressed and not angelic or divine being; of which reserve and subjection the most instructive instances are found in the works of Angelico, who invariably uses inferior types for the features of humanity, even glorified, (excepting always the Madonna,) nor ever exerts his full power of beauty either in feature or expression except in angels or in the Madonna or in Christ. Now the expression of spiritual influence without supreme elevation of the bodily type we have seen to be a work of imagination penetrative, and we found it accomplished by Michael Angelo; but I think by him only. I am aware of no one else who, to my mind, has expressed the inspiration of prophet or sibyl; this however I affirm not, but shall leave to the determination of the reader, as the principles at present to be noted refer entirely to that elevation of the creature form necessary when it is actually representative of a spiritual being.

§ 7 No representation of that which is more than creature is possible

I have affirmed in the conclusion of the first section that "of that which is more than creature no creature ever conceived." I think this almost self-evident, for it is clear that the illimitableness of Divine attributes cannot be by matter represented, (though it may be typified,) and I believe that all who are acquainted with the range of sacred art will admit, not only that no representation of Christ has ever been even partially successful, but that the greatest painters fall therein below their accustomed level; Perugino and Fra Angelico especially; Leonardi has I think done best, but perhaps the beauty of the fragment left at Milan (for in spite of all that is said of repainting and destruction, that Cenacolo is still the finest in existence) is as much dependent on the very untraceableness resulting from injury as on its original perfection. Of more daring attempts at representation of Divinity we need not speak; only this is to be noted respecting them, that though by the ignorant Romanists many such efforts were made under the idea of actual representation, (note the way in which Cellini speaks of the seal made for the Pope,) by the nobler among them I suppose they were intended, and by us at any rate they may always be received, as mere symbols, the noblest that could be employed, but as much symbols still as a triangle, or the Alpha and Omega; nor do I think that the most scrupulous amongst Christians ought to desire to exchange the power obtained by the use of this symbol in Michael Angelo's creation of Adam and of Eve for the effect which would be produced by the substitution of a triangle or any other sign in place of it. Of these efforts then we need reason no farther, but may limit ourselves to considering the purest modes of giving a conception of superhuman but still creature form, as of angels; in equal rank with whom, perhaps, we may without offence place the mother of Christ: at least we must so regard the type of the Madonna in receiving it from Romanist painters.*

* I take no note of the representation of *evil* spirits, since throughout we have been occupied in the pursuit of beauty; but it may be observed generally that there is great difficulty to be overcome in attempts of this kind, because the elevation of the form necessary to give it spirituality destroys the appearance of evil; hence even the greatest painters have been reduced to receive aid from the fancy, and to eke out all they could conceive of malignity by help of horns, hoofs, and claws. Giotto's Satan in the Campo Santo, with

§ 8. Supernatural character expressed by modification of accessories.

And first, much is to be done by right modification of accessory circumstances, so as to express miraculous power exercised over them by the spiritual creature. There is a beautiful instance of this in John Bellini's picture of St. Jerome at Venice. The saint sits upon a rock, his grand form defined against clear green open sky; he is reading, a noble tree springs out of a cleft in the rock, bends itself suddenly back to form a rest for the volume, then shoots up into the sky. There is something very beautiful in this obedient ministry of the lower creature; but be it observed that the sweet feeling of the whole depends upon the service being such as is consistent with its nature. It is not animated, it does not *listen* to the saint, nor bend itself towards him as if in affection, this would have been mere fancy, illegitimate and effectless. But the simple bend of the trunk to receive the book is miraculous subjection of the true nature of the tree; it is therefore imaginative, and very touching.

§ 9. Landscape of the religious painters. Its character is eminently symmetrical.

It is not often however that the religious painters even go this length; they content themselves usually with impressing on the landscape perfect symmetry and order, such as may seem consistent with, or induced by the spiritual nature they would represent. All signs of decay, disturbance, and imperfection, are also banished; and in doing this it is evident that some unnaturalness and singularity must result, inasmuch as there are no veritable forms of landscape but express or imply a state of progression or of imperfection. All mountain forms are seen to be produced by convulsion and

the serpent gnawing the heart, is fine; so many of the fiends of Orcagna, and always those of Michael Angelo. Tintoret in the Temptation, with his usual truth of invention, has represented the evil spirit under the form of a fair angel, the wings burning with crimson and silver, the face sensual and treacherous. It is instructive to compare the results of imagination associated with powerful fancy in the demons of these great painters, or even in such nightmares as that of Salvator already spoken of, Sect. I. Chap. V. § 12 (note,) with the simple ugliness of idiotic distortion in the meaningless terrorless monsters of Bronzino in the large picture of the Uffizii, where the painter, utterly uninventive, having assembled all that is abominable of hanging flesh, bony limbs, crane necks, staring eyes, and straggling hair, cannot yet by the sum and substance of all obtain as much real fearfulness as an imaginative painter could throw into the turn of a lip or the knitting of a brow.

modelled by decay; the finer forms of cloud have stories in them about storm; all forest grouping is wrought out with varieties of strength and growth among its several members, and bears evidences of struggle with unkind influences. All such appearances are banished in the supernatural landscape; the trees grow straight, equally branched on each side, and of such slight and feathery frame as shows them never to have encountered blight or frost or tempest. The mountains stand up in fantastic pinnacles; there is on them no trace of torrent, no scathe of lightning; no fallen fragments encumber their foundations, no worn ravines divide their flanks; the seas are always waveless, the skies always calm, crossed only by fair, horizontal, lightly wreathed, white clouds.

§ 10. Landscape of Benozzo Gozzoli.

In some cases these conditions result partly from feeling, partly from ignorance of the facts of nature, or incapability of representing them, as in the first type of the treatment found in Giotto and his school; in others they are observed on principle, as by Benozzo Gozzoli, Perugino, and Raffaelle. There is a beautiful instance by the former in the frescoes of the Ricardi palace, where behind the adoring angel groups the landscape is governed by the most absolute symmetry; roses and pomegranates, their leaves drawn to the last rib and vein, twine themselves in fair and perfect order about delicate trellises; broad stone pines and tall cypresses overshadow them, bright birds hover here and there in the serene sky, and groups of angels, hand joined with hand, and wing with wing, glide and float through the glades of the unentangled forest. But behind the human figures, behind the pomp and turbulence of the Kingly procession descending from the distant hills the spirit of the landscape is changed. Severer mountains rise in the distance, ruder prominences and less flowery vary the nearer ground, and gloomy shadows remain unbroken beneath the forest branches.

§ 11. Landscape of Perugino and Raffaelle.

The landscape of Perugino, for grace, purity and as much of nature as is consistent with the above-named conditions, is unrivalled; and the more interesting because in him certainly whatever limits are set to the rendering of nature proceed not from incapability. The sea is in the distance almost always, then some blue promontories and undulating dewy park ground, studded with glittering trees; in the

landscape of the fresco in Sta. Maria Maddalena at Florence there is more variety than is usual with him; a gentle river winds round the bases of rocky hills, a river like our own Wye or Tees in their loveliest reaches; level meadows stretch away on its opposite side; mounds set with slender-stemmed foliage occupy the nearer ground, a small village with its simple spire peeps from the forest at the bend of the valley, and it is remarkable that in architecture thus employed neither Perugino nor any other of the ideal painters ever use Italian forms but always Transalpine, both of church and castle. The little landscape which forms the background of his own portrait in the Uffizii is another highly finished and characteristic example. The landscape of Raffaelle was learned from his father, and continued for some time little modified, though expressed with greater refinement. It became afterwards conventional and poor, and in some cases altogether meaningless. The haystacks and vulgar trees behind the St. Cecilia at Bologna form a painful contrast to the pure space of mountain country in the Perugino opposite.*

§ 12. Such Landscape is not to be imitated.

In all these cases, while I would uphold the landscape thus employed and treated, as worthy of all admiration, I should be sorry to advance it for imitation. What is right in its mannerism arose from keen feeling in the painter: imitated without the same feeling, it would be painful; the only safe mode of following in such steps is to attain perfect knowledge of nature herself, and then to suffer our own feelings to guide us in the selection of what is fitting for any particular purpose. Every painter ought to paint what he himself loves, not what others have loved; if his mind be pure and sweetly toned, what he loves will be lovely; if otherwise, no example can guide his selection, no precept govern his hand; and farther let it be distinctly observed, that all this mannered land-

* I have not thought it necessary to give farther instances at present, since I purpose hereafter to give numerous examples of this kind of ideal landscape. Of true and noble landscape, as such, I am aware of no instances except where least they might have been expected, among the sea-bred Venetians. Ghirlandajo shows keen, though prosaic, sense of nature in that view of Venice behind an Adoration of Magi in the Uffizii, but he at last walled himself up among gilded entablatures. Masaccio indeed has given one grand example in the fresco of the Tribute Money, but its color is now nearly lost

scape is only right under the supposition of its being a background to some supernatural presence; behind mortal beings it would be wrong, and by itself, as landscape, ridiculous; and farther, the chief virtue of it results from the exquisite refinement of those natural details consistent with its character from the botanical drawing of the flowers and the clearness and brightness of the sky.

§ 13 Color, and Decoration. Their use in representations of the Supernatural.

Another mode of attaining supernatural character is by purity of color almost shadowless, no more darkness being allowed than is absolutely necessary for the explanation of the forms, and the vividness of the effect enhanced as far as may be by use of gilding, enamel, and other jewellery. I think the smaller works of Angelico are perfect models in this respect; the glories about the heads being of beaten rays of gold, on which the light plays and changes as the spectator moves; (and which therefore throw the purest flesh color out in dark relief) and such color and light being obtained by the enamelling of the angel wings as of course is utterly unattainable by any other expedient of art; the colors of the draperies always pure and pale; blue, rose, or tender green, or brown, but never dark or gloomy; the faces of the most celestial fairness, brightly flushed: the height and glow of this flush are noticed by Constantin as reserved by the older painters for spiritual beings, as if expressive of light seen through the body.

I cannot think it necessary while I insist on the value of all these seemingly childish means when in the hands of a noble painter, to assert also their futility and even absurdity if employed by no exalted power. I think the error has commonly been on the side of scorn, and that we reject much in our foolish vanity, which if wiser and more earnest we should delight in. But two points it is very necessary to note in the use of such accessories.

§ 14. Decoration so used must be generic,

The first that the ornaments used by Angelico Giotto, and Perugino, but especially by Angelico, are always of a generic and abstract character. They are not diamonds, nor brocades, nor velvets, nor gold embroideries; they are mere spots of gold or of color, simple patterns upon *textureless* draperies; the angel wings burn with transparent crimson and purple and amber, but they are not set forth with peacocks' plumes; the golden circlets gleam with changeful light,

but they are not beaded with elaborate pearls nor set with studied sapphires.

In the works of Filippino Lippi, Mantegna, and many other painters following, interesting examples may be found of the opposite treatment; and as in Lippi the heads are usually very sweet, and the composition severe, the degrading effect of the realized decorations and imitated dress may be seen in him simply, and without any addition of painfulness from other deficiencies of feeling. The larger of the two pictures in the Tuscan room of the Uffizii, but for this defect, would have been a very noble ideal work.

§ 15. And color pure.

The second point to be observed is that brightness of color is altogether inadmissible without purity and harmony; and that the sacred painters must not be followed in their frankness of unshadowed color unless we can also follow them in its clearness. As far as I am acquainted with the modern schools of Germany, they seem to be entirely ignorant of the value of color as an assistant of feeling, and to think that hardness, dryness, and opacity are its virtues as employed in religious art; whereas I hesitate not to affirm that in such art more than in any other, clearness, luminousness and intensity of hue are essential to right impression; and from the walls of the Arena chapel in their rainbow play of brilliant harmonies, to the solemn purple tones of Perugino's fresco in the Albizzi palace, I know not any great work of sacred art which is not as precious in color as in all other qualities (unless indeed it be a Crucifixion of Fra Angelico in the Florence Academy, which has just been glazed and pumiced and painted and varnished by the picture-cleaners until it glares from one end of the picture gallery to the other;) only the pure white light and delicate hue of the idealists, whose colors are by preference such as we have seen to be the most beautiful in the chapter on Purity, are carefully to be distinguished from the golden light and deep pitched hue of the school of Titian whose virtue is the grandeur of earthly solemnity, not the glory of heavenly rejoicing.

§ 16. Ideal form of the body itself, of what variety susceptible.

But leaving these accessory circumstances and touching the treatment of the bodily form, it is evident in the first place that whatever typical beauty the human body is capable of possessing must be bestowed upon it when it is understood as spiritual. And therefore

those general proportions and types which are deducible from comparison of the nobler individuals of the race, must be adopted and adhered to; admitting among them not, as in the human ideal, such varieties as result from past suffering, or contest with sin, but such only as are consistent with sinless nature or are the signs of instantly or continually operative affections; for though it is conceivable that spirit should suffer, it is inconceivable that spiritual frame should retain like the stamped inelastic human clay, the brand of sorrow past, unless fallen.

> "His face,
> Deep scars of thunder had entrenched, and care
> Sat on his faded cheek."

Yet so far forth the angelic ideal is diminished, nor could this be suffered in pictorial representation.

§ 17. Anatomical development how far admissible.

Again, such muscular development as is necessary to the perfect beauty of the body, is to be rendered. But that which is necessary to strength, or which appears to have been the result of laborious exercise, is inadmissible. No herculean form is spiritual, for it is degrading the spiritual crea ture to suppose it operative through impulse of bone and sinew; its power is immaterial and constant, neither dependent on, nor developed by exertion. Generally, it is well to conceal anatomical development as far as may be; even Michael Angelo's anatomy interferes with his divinity; in the hands of lower men the angel becomes a preparation. How far it is possible to subdue or generalize the naked form I venture not to affirm, but I believe that it is best to conceal it as far as may be, not with draperies light and undulating, that fall in with, and exhibit its principal lines, but with draperies severe and linear, such as were constantly employed before the time of Raffaelle. I recollect no single instance of a naked angel that does not look boylike or childlike, and unspiritualized; even Fra Bartolomeo's might with advantage be spared from the pictures at Lucca, and, in the hands of inferior men, the sky is merely encumbered with sprawling infants; those of Domenichino in the Madonna del Rosario, and Martyrdom of St. Agnes, are peculiarly offensive, studies of bare-legged children howling and kicking in volumes of smoke. Confusion seems to exist in the minds of subsequent painters between Angels and Cupids

§ 18. Symmetry. How valuable.

Farther, the qualities of symmetry and repose are of peculiar value in spiritual form. We find the former most earnestly sought by all the great painters in the arrangement of the hair, wherein no loosely flowing nor varied form is admitted, but all restrained in undisturbed and equal ringlets; often, as in the infant Christ of Fra Angelico, supported on the forehead in forms of sculpturesque severity. The Angel of Masaccio, in the Deliverance of Peter, grand both in countenance and motion, loses much of his spirituality because the painter has put a little too much of his own character into the hair, and left it disordered.

§ 19 The influence of Greek art, how dangerous.

Of repose, and its exalting power, I have already said enough for our present purpose, though I have not insisted on the peculiar manifestation of it in the Christian ideal as opposed to the pagan. But this, as well as all other questions relating to the particular development of the Greek mind, is foreign to the immediate inquiry, which therefore I shall here conclude in the hope of resuming it in detail after examining the laws of beauty in the inanimate creation; always, however, holding this for certain, that of whatever kind or degree the short coming may be, it is not possible but that short coming should be visible in every pagan conception, when set beside Christian; and believing, for my own part, that there is not only deficiency, but such difference in kind as must make all Greek conception full of danger to the student in proportion to his admiration of it; as I think has been fatally seen in its effect on the Italian schools, when its pernicious element first mingled with their solemn purity, and recently in its influence on the French historical painters: neither can I from my present knowledge fix upon an ancient statue which expresses by the countenance any one elevated character of soul, or any single enthusiastic self-abandoning affection, much less any such majesty of feeling as might mark the features for supernatural. The Greek could not conceive a spirit; he could do nothing without limbs; his god is a finite god, talking, pursuing and going journeys;* if at any time he was

§ 20. Its scope how limited.

* I know not anything in the range of art more unspiritual than the Apollo Belvidere; the raising of the fingers of the right hand in surprise at the truth of the arrow is altogether human, and would be vulgar in a prince, much more in a deity. The sandals destroy the divinity of the foot, and the lip is curled with mortal passion.

touched with a true feeling of the unseen powers around him, it was in the field of poised battle, for there is something in the near coming of the shadow of death, something in the devoted fulfilment of mortal duty, that reveals the real God, though darkly; that pause on the field of Platæa was not one of vain superstition; the two white figures that blazed along the Delphic plain, when the earthquake and the fire led the charge from Olympus, were more than sunbeams on the battle dust; the sacred cloud, with its lance light and triumph singing, that went down to brood over the masts of Salamis, was more than morning mist among the olives: and yet what were the Greek's thoughts of his god of battle? No spirit power was in the vision; it was a being of clay strength and human passion, foul, fierce, and changeful; of penetrable arms, and vulnerable flesh. Gather what we may of great, from pagan chisel or pagan dream, and set it beside the orderer of Christian warfare, Michael the Archangel: not Milton's "with hostile brow and visage all inflamed," not even Milton's in kingly treading of the hills of Paradise, not Raffaelle's with the expanded wings and brandished spear, but Perugino's with his triple crest of traceless plume unshaken in heaven, his hand fallen on his crossleted sword, the truth girdle binding his undinted armor; God has put his power upon him, resistless radiance is on his limbs, no lines are there of earthly strength, no trace on the divine features of earthly anger; trustful and thoughtful, fearless, but full of love, incapable except of the repose of eternal conquest, vessel and instrument of Omnipotence, filled like a cloud with the victor light, the dust of principalities and powers beneath his feet, the murmur of hell against him heard by his spiritual ear like the winding of a shell on the far off sea-shore.

§ 21. Conclusion.

It is vain to attempt to pursue the comparison; the two orders of art have in them nothing common, and the field of sacred history, the intent and scope of Christian feeling, are too wide and exalted to admit of the juxtaposition of any other sphere or order of conception; they embrace all other fields like the dome of heaven. With what comparison shall we compare the types of the martyr saints, the St. Stephen of Fra Bartolomeo, with his calm forehead crowned by the stony diadem, or the St. Catherine of Raffaelle looking up to heaven in the dawn of the eternal day, with her lips parted in the resting from her pain? or

with what the Madonnas of Francia and Pinturicchio, in whom the hues of the morning and the solemnity of eve, the gladness in accomplished promise, and sorrow of the sword-pierced heart, are gathered into one human lamp of ineffable love? or with what the angel choirs of Angelico, with the flames on their white foreheads waving brighter as they move, and the sparkles streaming from their purple wings like the glitter of many suns upon a sounding sea, listening, in the pauses of alternate song, for the prolonging of the trumpet blast, and the answering of psaltery and cymbal, throughout the endless deep and from all the star shores of heaven?

ADDENDA.

ALTHOUGH the plan of the present portion of this work does not admit of particular criticism, it will neither be useless nor irrelevant to refer to one or two works, lately before the public, in the Exhibitions of the Royal Academy, which either illustrate, or present exceptions to, any of the preceding statements. I would first mention, with reference to what has been advanced respecting the functions of Associative Imagination, the very important work of Mr. Linnell, the "Eve of the Deluge;" a picture upheld by its admirers (and these were some of the most intelligent judges of the day) for a work of consummate imaginative power; while it was pronounced by the public journals to be "a chaos of unconcocted color." If the writers for the press had been aware of the kind of study pursued by Mr. Linnell through many laborious years, characterised by an observance of nature scrupulously and minutely patient, directed by the deepest sensibility, and aided by a power of drawing almost too refined for landscape subjects, and only to be understood by reference to his engravings after Michael Angelo, they would have felt it to be unlikely that the work of such a man should be entirely undeserving of respect. On the other hand, the grounds of its praise were unfortunately chosen; for, though possessing many merits, it had no claim whatever to be ranked among productions of Creative art. It would perhaps be difficult to point to a work so exalted in feeling, and so deficient in invention. The sky had been strictly taken from nature, this was evident at a glance; and as a study of sky it was every way noble. To the purpose of the picture it hardly contributed: its sublimity was that of splendor, not of terror; and its darkness that of retreating, not of gathering, storm. The features of the landscape were devoid alike of variety and probability; the division of the scene by the central valley and winding river at once theatrical and commonplace; and the foreground, on which the light was intense, alike devoid of dignity in arrangement, and of interest in detail.

The falseness or deficiency of color in the works of Mr. Landseer

has been remarked above. The writer has much pleasure in noticing a very beautiful exception in the picture of the "Random Shot," certainly the most successful rendering he has ever seen of the hue of snow under warm but subdued light. The subtlety of gradation from the portions of the wreath fully illumined, to those which, feebly tinged by the horizontal rays, swelled into a dome of dim purple, dark against the green evening sky; the truth of the blue shadows, with which this dome was barred, and the depth of delicate color out of which the lights upon the footprints were raised, deserved the most earnest and serious admiration; proving, at the same time, that the errors in color, so frequently to be regretted in the works of the painter, are the result rather of inattention than of feeble perception. A curious proof of this inattention occurs in the disposition of the shadows in the background of the "Old Cover Hack," No. 229. One of its points of light is on the rusty iron handle of a pump, in the shape of an S. The sun strikes the greater part of its length, illuminating the perpendicular portion of the curve; yet shadow is only cast on the wall behind by the returning portion of the lower extremity. A smile may be excited by the notice of so trivial a circumstance; but the simplicity of the error renders it the more remarkable, and the great masters of chiaroscuro are accurate in all such minor points; a vague sense of greater truth results from this correctness, even when it is not in particulars analyzed or noted by the observer. In the small but very valuable Paul Potter in Lord Westminster's collection, the body of one of the sheep under the hedge is for the most part in shadow, but the sunlight touches the extremity of the back. The sun is low, and the shadows feeble and distorted; yet that of the sunlighted fleece is cast exactly in its true place and proportion beyond that of the hedge. The spectator may not observe this; yet, unobserved, it is one of the circumstances which make him feel the picture to be full of sunshine.

As an example of perfect color, and of the most refined handling ever perhaps exhibited in animal painting, the Butcher's Dog in the corner of Mr. Mulready's "Butt," No. 160., deserved a whole room of the Academy to himself. This, with the spaniel in the "Choosing the Wedding Gown," and the two dogs in the hayfield subject (Burchell and Sophia), displays perhaps the most wonderful, because the most dignified, finish in the expression of anatomy and covering—of muscle and hide at once, and assuredly the most perfect unity of drawing and color, which the entire range of ancient and modern art can exhibit. Albert Durer is indeed the only rival who might be suggested; and, though greater far in imagination, and equal in draughtsmanship, Albert Durer was less true and less delicate in hue. In sculpturesque arrangement both masters show the same degree of feeling: any of these dogs of

Mulready might be taken out of the canvass and cut in alabaster, or, perhaps better, struck upon a coin. Every lock and line of the hair has been grouped as it is on a Greek die; and if this not always without some loss of ease and of action, yet this very loss is ennobling, in a period when all is generally sacrificed to the great coxcombry of art, the affectation of ease.

Yet Mr. Mulready himself is not always free from affectation of some kind; mannerism, at least, there is in his treatment of tree trunks. There is a ghastliness about his labored anatomies of them, as well as a want of specific character. Why need they be always flayed? The hide of a beech tree, or of a birch or fir, is nearly as fair a thing as an animal's; glossy as a dove's neck barred with black like a zebra, or glowing in purple grey and velvet brown like furry cattle in sunset. Why not paint these as Mr. Mulready paints other things, as they are? that simplest, that deepest of all secrets, which gives such majesty to the ragged leaves about the edges of the pond in the "Gravel-pit" (No. 125.), and imparts a strange interest to the grey ragged urchins disappearing behind the bank, that bank so low, so familiar, so sublime! What a contrast between the deep sentiment of that commonest of all common, homeliest of all homely, subjects, and the lost sentiment of Mr. Stanfield's "Amalfi," the chief landscape of the year, full of exalted material, and mighty crags, and massy seas, grottoes, precipices, and convents, fortress-towers and cloud-capped mountains, and all in vain, merely because that same simple secret has been despised; because nothing there is painted as it is! The picture was a most singular example of the scenic assemblage of contradictory theme which is characteristic of Picturesque, as opposed to Poetical, composition. The lines chosen from Rogers for a titular legend were full of summer, glowing with golden light and toned with quiet melancholy:

> "To him who sails
> Under the shore, a few white villages,
> Scattered above, below, some in the clouds,
> Some on the margin of the dark blue sea,
> And glittering thro' their lemon groves, announce
> The region of Amalfi. Then, half-fallen,
> A lonely watch-tower on the precipice,
> Their ancient landmark, comes—long may it last!
> And to the seaman, in a distant age,
> Though now he little thinks how large his debt,
> Serve for their monument."

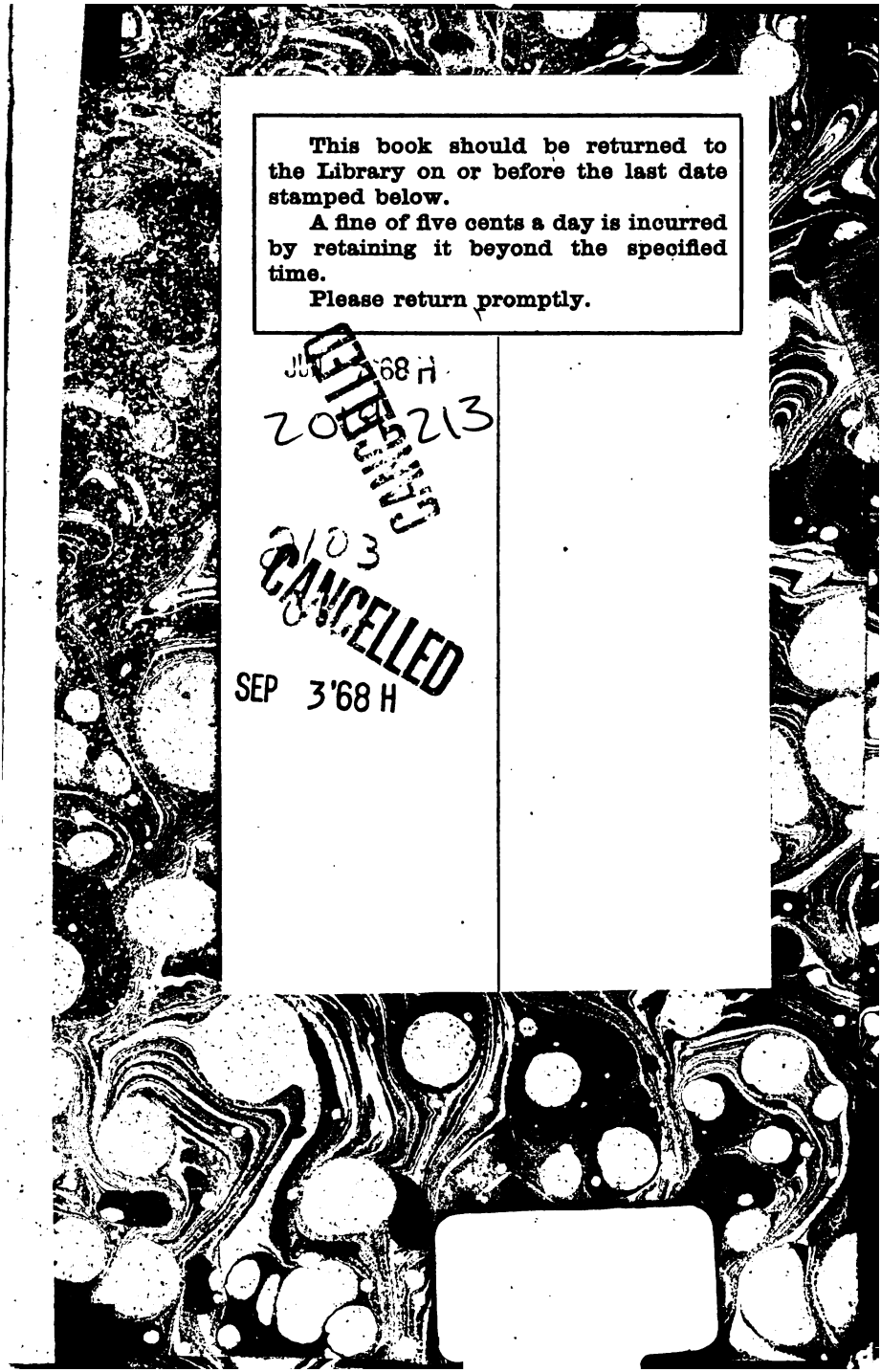
Prepared by these lines for a dream upon deep calm waters, under the shadow and scent of the close lemon leaves, the spectator found himself placed by the painter, wet through, in a noisy fishing boat, on a splashing sea, with just as much on his hands as he could manage to

keep her gunwale from being stove in against a black rock; and with a heavy grey squall to windward. (This squall, by the by, was the very same which appeared in the picture of the Magra of 1847, and so were the snowy mountains above; only the squall at Amalfi entered on the left, and at the Magra on the right.) Now the scenery of Amalfi is impressive alike in storm or calm, and the writer has seen the Mediterranean as majestic and as southern-looking in its rage as in its rest. But it is treating both the green water and woods unfairly to destroy their peace without expressing their power; and withdraw from them their sadness and their sun, without the substitution of any effect more terrific than that of a squall at the Nore. The snow on the distant mountains chilled what it could not elevate, and was untrue to the scene besides; there is no snow on the Monte St. Angelo in summer except what is kept for the Neapolitan confectioners. The great merit of the picture was its rock-painting; too good to have required the aid of the exaggeration of forms which satiated the eye throughout the composition.

Mr. F. R. Pickersgill's "Contest of Beauty" (No. 515.), and Mr. Uwins's "Vineyard Scene in the South of France," were, after Mr. Mulready's works, among the most interesting pieces of color in the Exhibition. The former, very rich and sweet in its harmonies, and especially happy in its contrasts of light and dark armor; nor less in the fancy of the little Love who, losing his hold of the orange boughs, was falling ignominiously without having time to open his wings. The latter was a curious example of what I have described as abstraction of color. Strictly true or possible it was not; a vintage is usually a dusty and dim-looking procedure; but there were poetry and feeling in Mr. Uwins's idealization of the sombre black of the veritable grape into a luscious ultra-marine purple, glowing among the green leaves like so much painted glass. The figures were bright and graceful in the extreme, and most happily grouped. Little else that could be called color was to be seen upon the walls of the Exhibition, with the exception of the smaller works of Mr. Etty. Of these, the single head, "Morning Prayer" (No. 25.), and the "Still Life" (No. 73.), deserved, allowing for their peculiar aim, the highest praise. The larger subjects, more especially the St. John, were wanting in the merits peculiar to the painter; and in other respects it is alike painful and useless to allude to them. A very important and valuable work of Mr. Harding was placed, as usual, where its merits could be but ill seen, and where its chief fault, a feebleness of color in the principal light on the distant hills, was apparent. It was one of the very few views of the year which were transcripts, nearly without exaggeration, of the features of the localities.

Among the less conspicuous landscapes, Mr. W. E. Dighton's "Hay-Meadow Corner" deserved especial notice; it was at once vigorous, fresh, faithful, and unpretending, the management of the distance most ingenious, and the painting of the foreground, with the single exception of Mr. Mulready's above noticed, unquestionably the best in the room. I have before had occasion to notice a picture by this artist, "A Hayfield in a Shower," exhibited in the British Institution in 1847, and this year (1848) in the Scottish Academy, whose sky, in qualities of rainy, shattered, transparent grey, I have seldom seen equalled; nor the mist of its distance, expressive alike of previous heat and present beat of rain. I look with much interest for other works by this painter.

A hurried visit to Scotland in the spring of this year, while it enables the writer to acknowledge the ardor and genius manifested in very many of the works exhibited in the Scottish Academy, cannot be considered as furnishing him with sufficient grounds for specific criticism. He cannot, however, err in testifying his concurrence in the opinion expressed to him by several of the most distinguished members of that Academy, respecting the singular merit of the works of Mr. H. Drummond. A cabinet picture of "Banditti on the Watch," appeared to him one of the most masterly, unaffected, and sterling pieces of quiet painting he has ever seen from the hand of a living artist; and the other works of Mr. Drummond were alike remarkable for their manly and earnest finish, and their sweetness of feeling.



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